NAZISM'S 'DEGENERATE ART' IN L.A., BY ROBERT DARNTON

MAY 6, 1991 • $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Paul Slansky's totally unauthorized Nancy/Kitty index

Slippery Yevtushenko

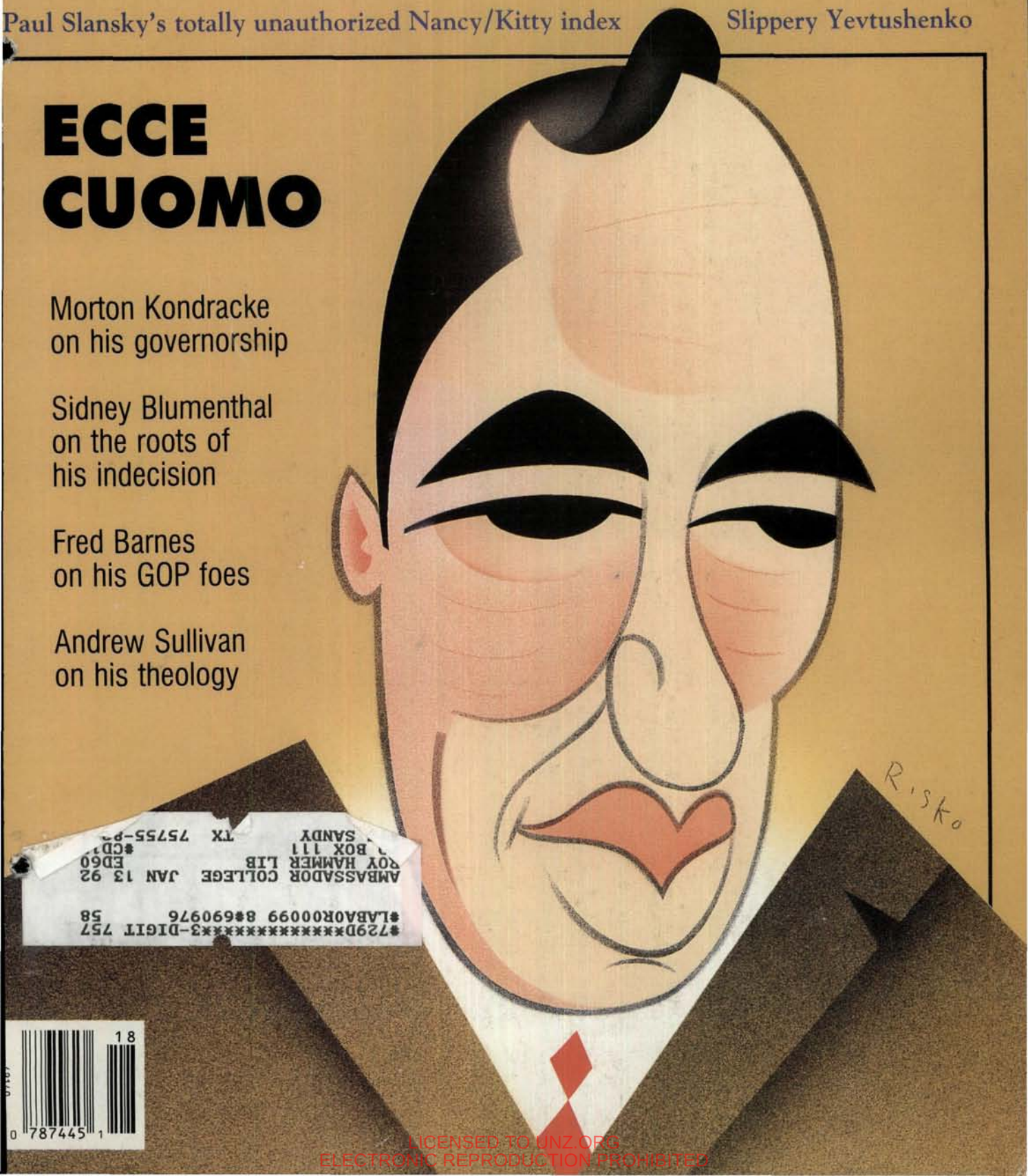
ECCE CUOMO

Morton Kondracke on his governorship

Sidney Blumenthal on the roots of his indecision

Fred Barnes on his GOP foes

Andrew Sullivan on his theology



AMBASSADOR COLLEGE JAN 13 92
ROY HAMMER LIB ED60
BOX 111 #CD1
SANDY TX 75755-P2
#729D**********3-DIGIT 757
#LABAOR00099 8#609976 58

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who cares about the Kurds?

We do.

The Kurdish people are in desperate need— the victims of continued Iraqi brutality.

We must respond. You can help save lives. Please send your contribution to any of the following organizations:

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

American Jewish World Service
1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104

American Red Cross
Kurdish Relief Fund, P.O. Box 37243, Washington, D.C. 20013

CARE
660 First Avenue, New York, NY 10016

We are our brothers' keepers.

ADL

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza, New York 10017

Melvin Salberg
National Chairman

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

MAY 6, 1991

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 3,981

Property of
Ambassador College Library
Big Sandy, TX 75755

RECEIVED
APR 21 1991

Cover by Robert Risko for THE NEW REPUBLIC.

4 **MICHAEL KINSLEY** TRB: INADMISSIBLE Crime and the exclusionary rule.

6 **CORRESPONDENCE** Vatican statements on Israel, Vatican dealings in Yugoslavia, &c.

7 **THE EDITORS** TIANANMEN SQUARED The Bush administration's continued appeasement of Beijing over dissidents and Tibet is a moral and political monstrosity. NOTEBOOK Their Lordships go all p.c., &c.

10 **BEN SHERWOOD** TOXIC SHOCK If Saddam Hussein had actually used his chemical weapons against American troops, their gas masks wouldn't have worked.

12 **JONATHAN RAUCH** IVORY POWER On the issue of whether government should intervene in university affairs to protect free speech, everyone's a hypocrite.

13 **ROBERT D. KAPLAN** ZORBA THE MEEK Why doesn't anybody care about the justified grievance of the Greek Cypriots? Because they don't use terrorism.

15 **PAUL SLANSKY** OUR TURN The totally unauthorized index to Kitty Kelley's book.

16 **ANDREW SULLIVAN** DEAD END Cuomo's abortion position makes no sense at all.

18 **MORTON KONDRACKE** BROKEN RECORD In his eight years of actually running a government, Mario Cuomo, master of the word, has been unimpressive as a doer of deeds.

21 **FRED BARNES** CUOMOPHOBIA Republicans are more scared of Mario than you'd think.

23 **SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL** CUOMO VADIS? A guide to the spiritual insecurities, political calculations, and presidential potential of the tortured governor of New York state.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: CONTRADICTIONS *La Femme Nikita* is a nervy, well-made, beautifully acted thriller about a murderer turned government assassin; Peter Greenaway's *Drowning by Numbers*, however, is beyond resuscitation.

27 **ROBERT DARNTON** THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF ART In 1937 the Nazi campaign against modernism culminated in an exhibition of 'Degenerate Art.' Much of that art is now on display in Los Angeles. Question: What in the world was Hitler so afraid of?

33 **TOMAS VENCLOVA** MAKING IT *The Collected Poems: 1952-1990* and *Fatal Half Measures: The Culture of Democracy in the Soviet Union* by Yevgeny Yevtushenko

36 **MONA VAN DUYN** POEM *Chagall's "Les Plumes en Fleur"*

37 **SVEN BIRKERTS** LONDON PSYCHO *The Women of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper* by Paul West

40 **LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI** THE MAN WHO MADE MODERNITY *Luther: Man Between God and Devil* by Heiko A. Oberman, translated by Eileen Walliser-Schwartzbart

42 **ANDREW SULLIVAN** WASHINGTON DIARIST: TAKEN UNSERIOUSLY Death of a philosopher.

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Editor
HENDRIK HERTZBERG
Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER
Managing Editor
DOROTHY WICKENDEN
Deputy Editor
ANDREW SULLIVAN
Senior Editors
FRED BARNES, SIDNEY BLUMENTHAL, ANN HULBERT, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, MORTON KONDRACKE, JACOB WEISBERG, ROBERT WRIGHT
Editor, New Republic Books (Basic Books)
PETER BEJGER
Economics
ROBERT KUTTNER
Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN
Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN
Music
EDWARD ROTHSTEIN
Poetry
RICHARD HOWARD
Art
MARK STEVENS
Architecture
HERBERT MUSCHAMP
Contributing Editors
ELIOT A. COHEN, ROBERT COLES, STANLEY CROUCH, JAMES K. GLASSMAN, JOHN B. JUDIS, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, LOUIS MENAND, ADAM MICHNIK, ROBERT B. REICH, JONATHAN RIEDER, MAGGIE SCARF, RONALD STEEL, E. V. THAW, ANNE TYLER, NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN, MICHAEL WALZER, C. VANN WOODWARD
Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY
Assistant to the Editors
JUNE HALEY
Assistant Editors
KAREN LEHRMAN, LEONA HIRAOKA ROTH
Production Director
BRUCE STEINKE
Production Manager
KRISTIN CONRADI
Production Associate
DON HARRIS
Literary Assistant
AIMS McGUINNESS
Reporter-Researchers
DAVID GREENBERG, JONATHAN KARL, JAMES WORKMAN

President
JEFFREY L. DEARTH
Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON
Associate Publisher-Marketing
PAUL J. VIZZA
Associate Publisher-Circulation
H. EDWARD YOUNG
Controller
JEAN GANDY
Advertising Director
JENNIFER BARRETT
Accounting Manager
CHRISTINA R. OVERHOLSER
Circulation Manager
PATTI NAJDA
Advertising Assistant
CECELIA M. STEPHENS
Accounting Assistant
CHRISTINE SCHAUT
Back Issues and Reception
CAROLYN PARHAM
Leadership Network Advertising
ROBERT F. SENNOTT JR.

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 204, Number 18, Issue 3,981, May 6, 1991. (Printed in the U.S. on April 17, 1991.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 7 & 14, July 15 & 22, Aug. 19 & 26, and Sept. 16 & 23, 1991) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1991 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

Inadmissible

The U.S. prison population has tripled in the past two decades, to more than a million. This country has more of its population behind bars than any other nation with reliable statistics. South Africa is second, the Soviet Union is third. Now that South Africa has a moratorium on executions, we're also the only advanced Western nation with a death penalty. It is absurd to say the answer to rising crime is locking up even more people for even longer periods, or chopping off more heads. But few politicians can resist.

President Bush's crime bill imposes the death penalty for forty federal crimes. Senator Joe Biden's Democratic alternative sees his forty and raises him four. Several factors drive the nation's leaders to such absurdities. Real street crime is not a federal government concern. One obvious national remedy—serious gun control—is beyond the pale. Addressing the social conditions that cause crime is hopelessly "liberal," and even a sensible "conservative" remedy—lots more cops on the beat—would mean spending tons of money, which no one dares to propose. So we are reduced (as Stuart Taylor Jr. jokes in *Legal Times*) to unlikely crimes like "executing any marijuana farmer whose weed causes a motorist to . . . run over a mailman on an Indian reservation."

Jeremy Bentham, who first elaborated the theory of prison as a deterrent to crime, might look at America's choked prisons and say we've got it all wrong. As James Q. Wilson and Richard Herrnstein, no softies, put it in their book, *Crime & Human Nature* (Simon and Schuster), "It may be easier to reduce crime by making penalties swifter or more certain, rather than more severe." America's absurdly long prison terms often come at the end of a lengthy and random process that nullifies their power as a deterrent to crime.

One element of Bush's crime bill that can't be laughed off immediately, therefore, is his proposal to limit the exclusionary rule. This is the rule that evidence obtained in violation of a person's constitutional rights cannot be used against him in court, even if it proves him guilty. Or, as Benjamin Cardozo famously derided the exclusionary rule, it is the doctrine that "the criminal is to go free because the constable has blundered."

Conservatives hate the exclusionary rule. Usually. There was *The Wall Street Journal* the other day inveighing against a Supreme Court decision barring the use of a coerced confession. "The exclusionary rule degrades law into a lawyers' game. . . . Letting juries hear the evidence, in all its strength and weakness, is the best guarantee of fair trails and effective prosecutions." A few days later there was the *Journal* again, celebrating (for the millionth time) an appeals court decision throwing out the conviction of Oliver North. The court ruled that the evidence against North was "tainted" by his congressional testimony, for which he'd been given immunity. The *Journal* did not claim that North's self-damning congressional testimony might be inaccurate (as a coerced confession might be). The jury had weighed the evidence and found North guilty. It was strictly a matter of the criminal going free because the constable (allegedly) had blundered. But there was no quoting of Cardozo on this occasion.

The exclusionary rule usually involves evidence obtained in violation of the Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable searches and seizures. Unlike a coerced confession, illegally seized evidence is just as probative as evidence seized properly. In the war of statistics about how often the guilty go free because good evidence against them can't be used, liberals are a bit disingenuous. It is rare that the exclusionary rule is actually invoked at a trial. But trials themselves are rare. Far more often, potentially excludable evidence will lead prosecutors to drop the case or negotiate a plea bargain for a shorter term.

Indeed, the best case against all the elaborate procedural safeguards created by the Warren Supreme Court is that they have created a level of protection for defendants that we can't afford to offer, and don't really offer. Practically all criminal defendants are actually tried in a much more rough-and-ready process—plea bargaining—in which there are no safeguards for the innocent or those whose constitutional rights have been violated, but where potential procedural claims are translated into shorter sentences. Meanwhile, legislatures increase the official sentences for crimes to counteract the plea bargaining effect.

So dump the exclusionary rule? Not so fast. There is a logical flaw in the argument that excluding wrongfully obtained evidence lets the guilty go free. That is: the guilty would also go free if the evidence hadn't been wrongly obtained in the first place. Conservatives complain about the burden of the exclusionary rule on cops and prosecutors. But the rule is a burden only to the extent that it actually works in deterring unconstitutional behavior. The complaint, in short, is not with the exclusionary rule. It is with the Fourth Amendment itself. Eliminating the exclusionary rule would only lead to more guilty people being punished if it also led to more illegal searches, seizures, and confessions: an effect the rule's critics take great pains to deny.

In fact, the Fourth Amendment—as interpreted by the Supreme Court—could use some pruning back. Most guilty-going-free horror stories you read in attacks on the exclusionary rule involve some piece of evidence ruled inadmissible on some overly exquisite chain of logic involving some cop's failure to curtsy in the right direction. But cops also violate real Fourth Amendment rights that most people treasure and everyone—criminals included—is entitled to. And they would do it a lot more often if it weren't for the exclusionary rule (as they did before the rule was imposed in 1961).

Most calls for reforming or eliminating the exclusionary rule, including President Bush's, come with deeply disingenuous alternative proposals for protecting Fourth and Fifth Amendment rights. These generally involve internal police department disciplinary procedures and/or an enhanced right for victims to sue. You will not be surprised to hear that the record of police departments punishing their own for rights violations is laughable, as is the record of juries sympathizing with criminals who sue cops.

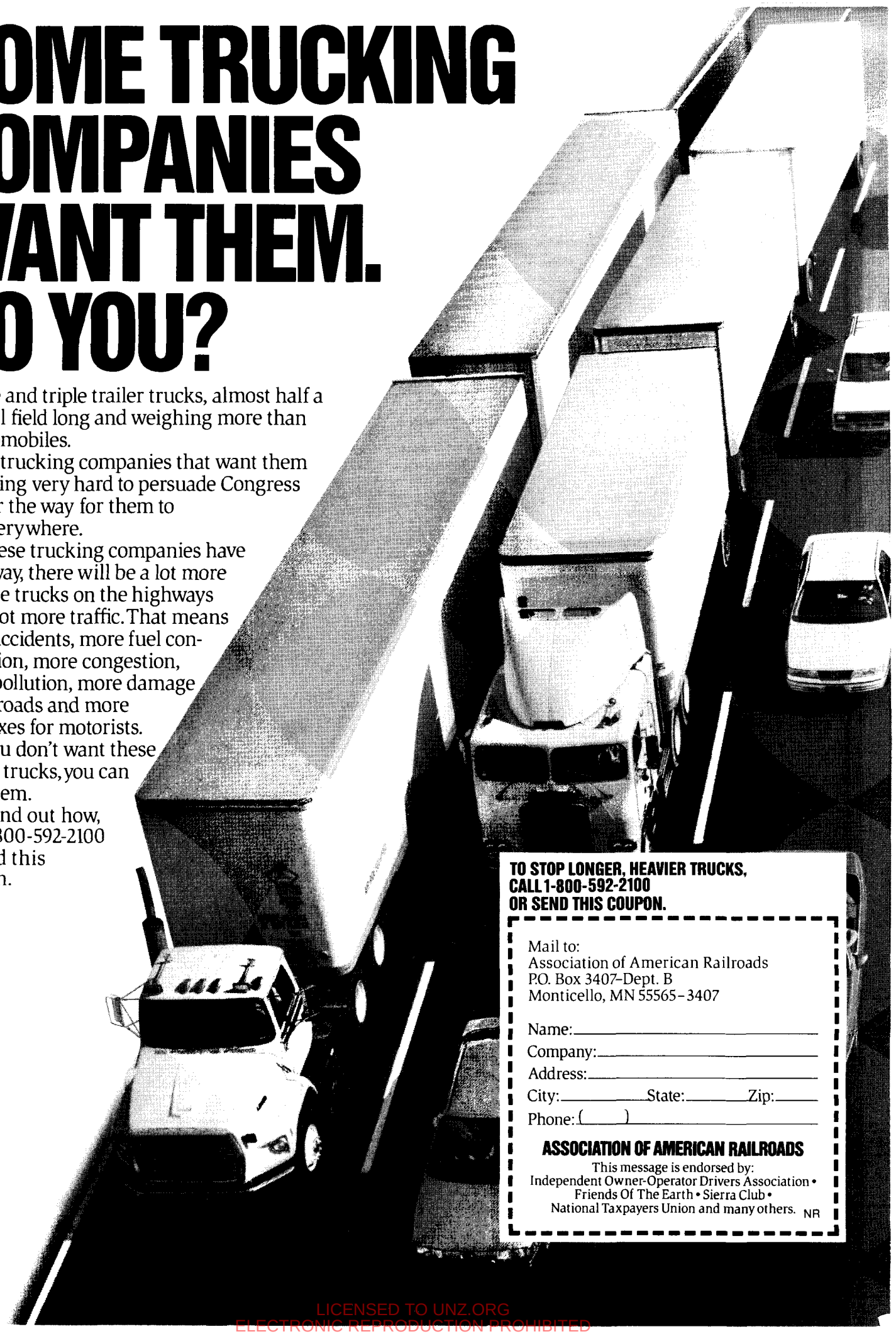
And isn't it odd for conservative *antilegalistas* to be proposing a whole new layer of bureaucratic and legal procedure? Addressing this concern, a recent Justice Department report notes—without apparent irony—that claims will be minimal since those whose rights were violated will not qualify for free legal counsel as they do in criminal trials. How very reassuring.

But the main problem with alternatives to the exclusionary rule is that *if they worked*, they would be just as burdensome to law enforcement as the exclusionary rule itself. The assumption has to be, therefore, that proponents assume they would *not* work. That certainly sounds like Attorney General Richard Thornburgh's assumption when he complains: "If [police] feel that someone's perched on their shoulder watching every action they're going to take, you're not going to get the kind of aggressive law enforcement that you need."

MICHAEL KINSLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SOME TRUCKING COMPANIES WANT THEM. DO YOU?



)ouble and triple trailer trucks, almost half a)otball field long and weighing more than 1 automobiles.

The trucking companies that want them re trying very hard to persuade Congress) clear the way for them to un everywhere.

If these trucking companies have neir way, there will be a lot more f these trucks on the highways nd a lot more traffic. That means nore accidents, more fuel consumption, more congestion, nore pollution, more damage) the roads and more uel taxes for motorists.

If you don't want these igger trucks, you can top them.

To find out how, all 1-800-592-2100 r send this oupon.

TO STOP LONGER, HEAVIER TRUCKS, CALL 1-800-592-2100 OR SEND THIS COUPON.

Mail to:
Association of American Railroads
P.O. Box 3407-Dept. B
Monticello, MN 55565-3407

Name:_____

Company:_____

Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

Phone: (____) _____

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS

This message is endorsed by:
Independent Owner-Operator Drivers Association • Friends Of The Earth • Sierra Club • National Taxpayers Union and many others. NR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Separation anxieties

To the editors:

"Forced Union" (April 8) is critical of President Gorbachev, yet not a word is mentioned about his laden legacy, inherited from czars and commissars. Nor is a word mentioned about the likelihood or expectation that a successor would offer greater prospects and hope of success. Evidently, incremental change since 1985 in the Soviet Union and withdrawal from Central and Eastern Europe doesn't fire your imagination sufficiently.

Regarding the second editorial in the same issue, "Rest in Pieces": it is ironic, as you note, that the world is focused on the Palestinians, whereas the fate of the Kurds is even more tragic. Still, the latter, contrary to your assertion, do not constitute "a real nation." A people, yes, but without international diplomatic recognition, control (as yet) of a definable territory, sovereignty, and a cognizable government. And contrary to your analysis, despite the fact that Iraq's boundaries were drawn by the British almost sixty years ago, it is more than prattle when the West alludes to Iraq's territorial integrity. Throughout history, territories have constantly been redrawn and defined. Accordingly, Iraq *is* a "real country," although it may not be, to cite your examples, homogeneous, like Sweden, Poland, and Japan.

Instead of encouraging a greater dispersal of power between the Soviet central authority and its respective republics, or, in the case of Iraq, participation in government (post Saddam Hussein) with power shared among the factions, you opt unwisely for political dismemberment. As an alternative, why not promote the ideas of pluralism, unmask political ambition and narrow nationalism, and stress toleration for differences within polities committed to the whole? Is Yugoslavia's separatism next on your agenda? What of India? Is support for secession contemplated for the United States too?

ELLIOTT A. COHEN
New York, New York

Enemy lines

To the editors:

It is unfortunate that Robert Kaplan ("Bloody Balkans," April 8) has assimilated the Serbian ultras' habit of referring to Albanian resistance in the Kosove region as an "intifada," considering that the Albanian resistance has remained scrupulously non-violent, unlike the Palestinian disturbances in Israel.

But it is completely false to refer to the Vatican as "appear[ing] to be stoking the flames of Croatian nationalism rather than supporting reconciliation with the Orthodox Serbs." In fact, the Vatican's actual role in the present Yugoslav crisis has been that of stalking horse for extremist elements in Serbia, including once-respected historians who now argue, in a hallucinated manner, that the Yugoslav Communists of the 1930s were secretly allied with the Vatican in an anti-Serbian conspiracy.

The Croatian Cardinal Franjo Kuharic and his Catholic bishops have consistently sided with the democratic forces in Yugoslavia, and have repeatedly called on the Serbian Orthodox hierarchy to join with them in an ecumenical effort to preserve civil peace. The Serbian Orthodox hierarchy flatly refused any such invitation until the recent democratic insurrection in Serbia forced Serbs to seek a common ground with Slovenia and Croatia, for the first time in decades. Mr. Kaplan refers to Serbia and "the historical enemies that surround it." Serbia's real enemies are inside its own people's minds, not among Croatians or Albanians.

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ
San Francisco, California

Unpromised land

To the editors:

In "Vaticant" (April 8) Furio Colombo writes that February 18 was the first time since 1947 that a pontiff used the expression "state of Israel." For the record, as I wrote in my book *The Papacy and the Middle East*, both John Paul II and his predecessor Pope Paul VI have uttered the words "state of Israel" in many instances. For example, in the case of John Paul II, on October 5, 1980, in a speech in Otranto, Italy, the pope stated that "the Jewish people, after a tragic experience linked to the extermination of so many sons and daughters, gave life to the state of Israel." And in 1985 the Vatican issued a statement reflecting the clear distinction the Holy See makes between religious and political issues. In that statement it was, in fact, written that "the existence of the state of Israel and its political choices must not be evaluated from a point of view which is in itself religious, but as they refer to common principles of international law."

At the end of his article Mr. Colombo writes that "the relationship between the Catholic Church and Islam takes precedence for the Vatican over the relationship between the Catholic Church and Judaism." If that's the case, how does Mr. Colombo explain Pope John Paul II's trip to the Synagogue of Rome on April 13, 1986, which marked the first recorded visit by a pope to a synagogue?

GEORGE EMILE IRANI
Franklin, Indiana
(Via 900 number)

1-900-726-6671

The New Republic welcomes correspondence from its readers. A fast, new way of doing this is our new 900 line. Deliver your opinions—long-pondered or spontaneous—over the phone. They will be considered for publication on this page along with regular letters to the editor. A call costs $1.25 a minute.

1-900-726-6671

Non-stop plight

To the editors:

In "Worst Enemy" (March 25) Martin Peretz alludes to the revenge taken against Palestinians by Kuwaitis who regard them as collaborators of the occupying Iraqis. It is interesting that no one on the world stage has suggested that the coalition forces (including the United States) bear any responsibility for anticipating, preventing, or now stopping the expulsions, executions, and torture of Palestinians left in Kuwait.

The world's complacency toward the plight of the Palestinian people in Kuwait stands in sharp contrast to its extreme outrage at the 1982 massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon. That bloodbath was perpetrated by Christian Phalangists shortly after Israel entered Lebanon to expel the PLO. World condemnation was directed toward Israel because its forces occupied Beirut. The direct role of the Phalangists was virtually obscured by the outcry against Israel.

This is just the most recent example of the double standard by which Israel is consistently judged.

ELLEN EPPS LUDWIG
ROBERT L. LUDWIG
Briarcliff Manor, New York

Clurman letters

To the editors:

For an authorized edition of the letters of Harold Clurman (1901-1980), Ameri-

continued on page 41

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

MAY 6, 1991

TIANANMEN SQUARED

The support of existing nation-states seems to have become a cornerstone of the Bush administration's foreign policy. It can be seen in the reluctance to address the plight of the Kurds and Shiites of Iraq, and in the relentless attempt to keep the Soviet Union a seamless whole. Neither policy is in the interests of the United States, or of the unfortunate people who are forced to live under those regimes.

But there are few places where the administration's approach makes less moral, strategic, or practical sense than China. For that Communist satrapy, above even Baath Iraq, George Bush has long reserved a special place in his heart. As ambassador to the United Nations from 1971 to 1972, Mr. Bush served as an unwitting cover for the Nixon-Kissinger initiative to open relations with China. While they conducted their secret diplomacy, Ambassador Bush was sent out to defend Taiwan. Yet although he was humiliated by Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon, George Bush remained in awe of them. He even asked to be made Mr. Kissinger's deputy. (The application was rejected.) Mr. Bush's first choice for a job from President Ford was plenipotentiary to China.

As president, Mr. Bush has deferred unerringly to the Chinese dictatorship. After the Tiananmen Square massacre the president both lied to the American public about his activities and reassured the Chinese Stalinists of unruffled relations with the United States. "Friends forever," said his national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, in a subsequent toast to the Chinese rulers in Beijing. Last year Mr. Bush vetoed a bill that would have guaranteed that no Chinese students in America would ever be deported to their homeland, adding insult to the Tiananmen injury. In defending his actions he argued, in the best Nixon-Kissinger tradition, that private diplomacy—not public disdain—is the best way to press for democracy in China.

The most recent display of this Beijing minuet has been over Tibet. All that has been requested of Mr. Bush is that he recognize the plight of the Tibetan people, who have long been savagely repressed by China. The most recent opportunity for this came last week, when the Dalai Lama visited Washington. Mr. Bush's initial reaction was one of hostility. The president undermined Congress's efforts to extend a welcome to the Tibetan leader. Congress had planned to honor him by inviting him to address a joint session on April 16, but, according to congressional sources, the White House pressured legislative leaders to extend a joint session invitation to President Violeta Chamorro of Nicaragua instead. Having ensured this snub, the president engineered his own public relations coup, by meeting with the Dalai Lama after all. But even then, he could not bring himself to make any clear statement of moral or political support.

He should have. The Tibetan independence movement is one of the more noble causes of recent times. The United States has never recognized Tibet's sovereignty, justifying its accession to China's brutal occupation by pointing to the sporadic Chinese rule over Tibet over the ages. To be sure, Tibet, like many countries, has a history marked by periods of autonomy interspersed

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with periods of foreign domination. Yet from 1911 to 1950 Tibet did exist as an independent nation, only falling under Chinese dominion in 1951, when Mao's army imposed its terms of "liberation" on its weaker neighbor. In 1959 the Chinese government began a wholesale campaign of repression, one of the bloodiest and most sustained in recent history, and one the International Commission of Jurists has termed genocide.

With the aim of exterminating Tibetan cultural autonomy, China has killed—by famine, warfare, and execution—more than a million Tibetans. The Communist government, deeming religion a special threat, has sought systematically to eradicate Tibetan Buddhism. Monasteries have been destroyed (a mere thirteen out of more than 6,000 remain), monks arrested and tortured. Party-controlled "Democratic Management Committees" narrowly circumscribe what exercise of religion they will permit.

After the 1989 uprisings—which broke out in Tibet in March, three months before Tiananmen Square—China imposed martial law. The Communist government then used the crisis as a pretext to arrest hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Tibetans. Kept indefinitely in detention, these political prisoners, according to the human rights group Asia Watch, have suffered cruel torture: beatings with sticks and rifle butts, shocks with electric cattle prods, and attacks by dogs. Many have died in prison as a result of their abuse. Their sentencing has been harsher even than the punishments meted out to the Beijing demonstrators. The Chinese government permitted human rights groups to observe the trials in Beijing, but not in Tibet. And although China has a law against trying minors, and no one under 18 faced trial in Beijing, a 14-year-old Tibetan got two years in prison for his role in the uprisings, and a 17-year-old got eight years.

In mainland China, the repression is less acute, but still sickening. While the Gulf war raged, leaders of China's democracy movement were dealt sentences of up to fifteen years for crimes such as "stirring up counterrevolutionary sentiment." Sentencing the journalist Wang Juntao and three other defendants to thirteen years in prison and three more of "deprivation of political rights," a Chinese judge insisted the decision was necessary "to uphold the authority of the people's democratic dictatorship" and "to crush the destructive activities of counterrevolutionary elements." In addition to the students and intellectuals, the government has targeted the workers who took part in the 1989 protests and who threatened to emerge as a Chinese Solidarity. Thousands of workers and other dissidents sit today, without trial, in overcrowded jails, where they are routinely beaten.

Mr. Bush has finally been forced to make a symbolic gesture, by quietly recognizing the Dalai Lama's existence. But he has not decided to end most-favored-nation status to China, a decision he must make by June 3. He has not used U.S. leverage with the World Bank to encourage China to stop its repression. He has yet to utter a forthright statement on the suppression of liberties in Tibet. He has been eerily passive in responding to the Chinese proliferation of nuclear weapons technology—and missiles—to Syria and Algeria. If Mr. Bush does not change the substance of his policy, the media event with the Dalai Lama will have been a hollow act.

The democracy movement in China, we should remember, is not dead. As Stephen Mosher noted in these pages last week ("Year of the Phoenix"), it is in fact showing remarkable signs of rebirth. It is tenacious because the ideas it embraces about individual liberty and human dignity are far more powerful than the cynical lies of Beijing's tottering dictators. For Tibet too, there is hope. The collapse of the Soviet Union shows that nations can survive the most systematic repression and return to membership in the civilized world. If the Ukraine and the Baltic states can rise to claim their sovereignty, Tibet's day too will surely arrive.

The ultimate question for America's leaders is whether their current attempt at realpolitik is not merely morally noxious but politically unwise. It is imprudence masquerading as statesmanship. Mr. Bush claims his policy of appeasement is an attempt to avoid isolating a billion Chinese, just as his policy of appeasing Saddam Hussein was a subtle ploy to gain leverage in the Middle East. But eventually those billion people will remember who stood by them in their struggle for democracy. And then it won't be the Chinese people who are isolated, but ourselves.

NOTEBOOK

POLL WATCH: As noted above, President Bush has finally met with the Dalai Lama, but he stopped well short of publicly supporting the independence of Tibet. Do you think the president should take this additional step—or is it more important for the United States to maintain smooth relations with the Chinese government? You can register your view on our Sound Off line, 1-900-726-6671.

CARDINAL VERDICT: Our Sound Off question two issues ago asked whether Catholic homophobia or liberal anti-Catholicism was the greater social ill. Sixty-four percent said homophobia, 36 percent said anti-Catholicism.

APPALACHIAN SPRING: We can't help admiring Robert Byrd's quiet effort to move the entire federal government beyond the Beltway—specifically, to West Virginia. The senator got some ink earlier this year when he arranged to transfer the FBI Identification Center to Clarksburg, at a cost of $185 million, but the Appropriations Committee chairman's other magnanimous deeds have been largely ignored. Thanks to him, the Coast Guard's national Computer Operations Center is now in landlocked Martinsburg. There is also a NASA research center in Wheeling, a radio telescope

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's simply good business to cut right to the dotted line.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
What's News—
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
Guide to Understanding Money & Markets
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

In business–in fact, in just about any endeavor–there's a fine line between keeping up and staying one step ahead. And often, the people who stay ahead are the people who are best informed.

That's where The Wall Street Journal comes in. It gives you a broad perspective on business, and valuable information on your competition...on marketing...on technology... on politics...on corporate and financial events throughout the U.S. and the world. And only The Journal gives you this essential information with such insight and clarity.

The Wall Street Journal–every business day. The Guide to Understanding Money and Markets–FREE. What more do you need to know?

The Guide to Understanding Money and Markets sells for $13.95. But With This Offer, It's Yours Free.

This invaluable 120-page, easy-to-read reference book defines and explains a variety of investment terms, so you can make full use of your money-making opportunities. It's a $13.95 value, yours FREE when you get 13 weeks of The Journal for just $37.

So here's the dotted line. You know what to do.

Cut out this coupon now for The Journal and your FREE Guide.

☐ Yes. Send me 13 weeks of The Journal for just $37.
☐ I prefer six months (26 weeks) for just $71.
With either choice, send my FREE Guide as soon as you receive payment.

☐ Payment enclosed *(payable to The Wall Street Journal)*.
☐ Bill me.
☐ Charge my: ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

Card No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Signature _____ Expires _____

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

228 East 45th Street
Suite 1515
New York, NY 10017

Name *(please print)* _____

Address _____ Suite/Apt. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Limited time offer–good in the continental U.S. only.

1NERE/39KC

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in Green Bank, a ballistics laboratory in Kaiser County, an occupational safety laboratory in Morgantown, a Job Corps center in Charleston, an aviation training center in Clarksburg, and a sprinkling of agricultural research stations around the state. And that's just in the last two years. As Mr. Byrd contemplates his legislative calendar, he may wish to note that Leetown still has no National Portrait Gallery, and that the Department of the Interior remains on hard-to-reach Constitution Avenue rather than in Tucker County, where a body might be able to find it. These anomalies require the senator's immediate attention.

NEXT, HOW ABOUT BEING ELECTED?:

HOUSE OF LORDS
LIBRARIAN
£35,000 +

The House of Lords seeks a Librarian to take up post in October 1991.

The Librarian is the senior of the 18 staff of the House of Lords Library, which provides a full Parliamentary library and information service for peers, including the Law Lords.

The successful candidate is likely to have experience of the management of an important library collection. While librarianship qualifications are not essential, candidates should have an up-to-date knowledge of modern library and information techniques and of British Parliamentary and Government publications. They should have personal qualities enabling them to deal effectively with members of the House and to lead their team of supporting staff.

Salary sc le £35,720 to £40,360. Further increments, up to a m aximum of £46,746, available for sustained high performance.

The usual retirement age is 65.

The House of Lords is an equal opportunities employer.

Application forms may be obtained from: The Establishment Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW (Tel. 071-219 3185). Completed forms should be returned by 7 May. Interviews will be held in June.

—*Times Literary Supplement*, April 5

(thanks to Stanley Kauffmann, New York, New York)

YANKEE STAY HERE: As predicted, Arab masses have finally risen up in revolt against U.S. forces in the Middle East—but what these masses are protesting is our *departure*. According to *The New York Times*, Shiite refugees housed in a camp in Safwan waved signs demanding that the Americans stay to defend them from Saddam Hussein. Some refugees threatened to throw themselves in front of tanks to keep the Americans from leaving. The refugees have little faith that the U.N. observer force of 1,400 that is now replacing 90,000 U.S. soldiers will protect them from reprisals by the Iraqi army and secret police. (Meanwhile, back in Kuwait, reports *The Boston Globe*'s Adam Pertman, Palestinians are pleading with American troops to stay and protect them from the Kuwaitis.) It has become ever clearer that the principal victim of the dreaded Vietnam syndrome President Bush talks about is the president himself. He's scared not of using force, but of any sustained presence that might lead to unforeseen consequences. The truth, of course, is that U.S. troops in Iraq aren't now in any serious danger, and, despite what Mr. Bush says, the American public is not demanding their immediate return. We've said it before, but it's a scandal for the president to abandon these innocents to their fate.

PINK, WHITE, AND BLUE II: The same week that an article in *National Review* came out in favor of gays in the military, a poll appeared suggesting high public support for the idea. Is the world coming to an end? The poll, conducted by a reputable company, was funded by the Human Rights Campaign Fund, a gay lobby. To the question "Do you think homosexuals should or should not be admitted to the armed forces?" 65 percent of 800 respondents said they should be. (Twenty-eight percent said no.) Of the more interesting findings, blacks and whites think roughly the same way on the issue, and Catholics are more likely than any other denomination to believe in this fundamental civil right. (Take that, Cardinal O'Connor!) And news for George Bush: 60 percent of Republicans are in favor. Why is the president still against?

CALLING DOCTOR FREUD: The week before last, TRB misquoted Democratic Party chairman Ron Brown as saying that, in working for the Haitian government of Baby Doc Duvalier during the 1980s, he thought he could do "more harm than good." Make that "more good than harm." Sorry. ●

Our chemical-unready troops.

TOXIC SHOCK

By Ben Sherwood

On a January afternoon at an 82nd Airborne forward camp in Saudi Arabia, sirens shattered the desert calm, warning of incoming Iraqi artillery rounds. Fearing nerve gas, the elite American troops quickly suited up in protective gear. Later, when the all-clear sounded, the lowest-ranking soldier in the camp was selected to remove his M-17 gas mask first, while the ranks watched anxiously for signs of twitching or drooling, symptoms of initial chemical exposure.

This human canary approach to chemical warfare may seem unusually primitive for such a celebrated high-tech war. Its backwardness, however, betrays one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Gulf war's dark little secrets: U.S. forces were not as well equipped or trained for chemical warfare as they should and could have been. Especially in the early days of the crisis, before the Pentagon could caulk and seal its leaky chemical defenses, the consequences could have been devastating. In fact, a newly declassified General Accounting Office study from January 1991 reveals that, prior to the Gulf mobilization, Army chemical specialists estimated that less than half of U.S. soldiers could have survived a chemical strike. This is just the latest in fifteen years of persistent warnings from credible public and private sources. But the Pentagon continues to insist that its chemical defense program is first-rate.

The centerpiece of the Army's chemical protection gear is the M-17 gas mask. Developed in the 1950s during the Korean War and deployed in the 1960s, the M-17 was a problem almost from the outset. A 1973 Army memo listed its many flaws. Among them, the M-17's filters cannot be replaced without first removing the mask. Even then, replacement could take up to fifteen minutes. In addition, the Army observed that the cumbersome mask "inhibits the performance of high activity tasks" such as aiming weapons or operating complicated equipment.

The Army decided to develop a new model and set its "required" due date at fiscal year 1983. No such luck. Virtually all the 300,000 U.S. Army troops in the Gulf carried an only slightly modified M-17. And the flaws remain. The main problem, according to a classified section of a 1986 GAO report, is leakage. "It has been estimated," the GAO explained, "that up to 50 percent of the masks currently in the field would leak if attacked with high concentrations of [chemical] agent." The M-17 is "subject to degradation from age," and the mask's seal is unsuited for some face shapes and sizes. Finally, the mask has a striking tactical limitation: it makes no provision for radio or telephone communications.

In 1982 the Army settled on a new mask, the M-40, for ground soldiers. Design innovations seemed to correct the problems of the old M-17. In June 1987 the initial production contract was awarded, and delivery was anticipated as early as June 1988. Three years later U.S. troops still don't have the M-40. In a classic procurement finger-pointing game, the Army blames the contractors, the contractors accuse the Army. And it will take another five or six years before the M-40 has completely replaced the M-17.

Why has the United States failed to modernize or replace its thirty-year-old mask? "It's really a great mystery," says Terry Gander, editor of *Jane's* definitive yearbook on chemical and biological protective equipment. "It's as though nobody in the U.S. wanted to know about chemical warfare." And it's not that money hasn't been spent: more than fifteen years and $100 million went to find an M-17 replacement. The British, by contrast, spent six years and $6 million developing their state-of-the-art S-10 mask.

But gas masks aren't the only problematic gear U.S. soldiers depended on in the Gulf. There's also the bulky chemical suit used by Army forces. Heat stress associated with the thick garments was so severe in the Gulf that the Air Force and Marines immediately began buying lighter suits made from German-designed material. In addition, the Army's fifteen-year-old chemical warfare gloves are cumbersome—try pulling a trigger with thick butyl rubber gloves—and are highly flammable. The Army's and Air Force's protective overboots are also flammable and non-durable, take fifteen minutes to put on, and are virtually impossible to lace up in the dark. The boots "protect long enough to escape after an attack, but not long enough to stand and fight," the GAO reported in 1986. U.S. airmen training in Europe were once ordered to remove the boots because they posed a safety hazard.

For armored units the prospects are no more encouraging. Company commanders told the Army inspector general in 1989 that soldiers riding in Bradley armored personnel carriers "will be combat ineffective because of degradation from overgarment heat stress, physical distress of riding in [full chemical gear] cross country, difficulties in donning equipment, and poor communications because of a lack of voicemitters" in the masks worn by the crews.

Soldiers also lack the crucial means to detect chemical and biological attacks, a hazard documented in an appendix titled "War Stoppers" in the 1989 inspector general's report. The lack of confidence soldiers felt in their detection equipment was clear at an air base in northern Saudi Arabia last January where U.S. forces hatched an improbable scheme to detect chemical or biological attacks: a dozen chickens in boxes were stationed at strategic points around the base.

It's not that the Army wasn't warned of the problems. In 1977 the GAO prepared a secret report evaluating U.S. chemical defenses, which judged the Army to be "at best marginally prepared to defend itself against a chemical attack." The Air Force was "incapable of defending itself." The Navy couldn't protect its ships, aircraft, and shore personnel. And the Marines were "at best marginally prepared" for chemical war. In 1982, citing Soviet superiority in all aspects of chemical warfare, the Pentagon asked Congress to authorize a five-year plan for modernizing U.S. chemical capabilities. In all, the program is estimated to have cost U.S. taxpayers between $6 billion and $7 billion.

What did we get for our money? In a classified section of a 1986 review of the plan, the GAO estimated that most U.S. forces were equipped to survive an initial attack, but that they remained unable to carry out operations in a chemical environment "without unacceptable levels of degradation in performance." And just a year before Saddam Hussein ordered his troops into Kuwait, the restricted Army inspector

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

general's report found that "training and materiel deficiencies still limit our ability to fight and sustain operations" on a chemical battlefield.

For its 1991 report, the GAO visited fifty-three Army active units and four reserve units in the United States and Europe. In one exercise conducted to reassure troops about the effectiveness of their gas masks, seven of twenty-three soldiers failed to don and adjust the masks properly to get an airtight fit. According to the GAO, many soldiers hadn't trained for four continuous hours in their full chemical protective gear—the Army's minimum requirement. And even then, the GAO said, exercises were not carried out under realistically simulated conditions.

Some efforts have been made recently to improve chemical gear. In the last six years the Army funded half a dozen new pieces of equipment for a total research and development bill of about $200.3 million. Despite the potential benefits, though, the GAO found that delivery of some of the equipment to Army units is "years behind schedule."

The Department of Defense and the Army continue to boast about the quality of U.S. chemical defenses in the Gulf. "At the start of Operation Desert Storm, our forces were the best equipped and trained in history to survive and fight on a CB [chemical-biological] battlefield," Dr. Bill Richardson, the Pentagon's top chemical warfare expert, said at an April 16 hearing of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness.

Of course, Richardson shrewdly cast his remarks in terms of the launch of Desert Storm, not the start of Desert Shield. The distinction conceals the fact that U.S. forces had five long months in the desert to learn what the GAO says they didn't back home: how to survive and fight on a chemical battlefield. The five-month wait also gave Pentagon officials time to cobble together enough equipment in case of chemical attack. When the Gulf crisis erupted, for instance, the U.S. military had no chemical or biological reconnaissance vehicles: the ensuing desert standoff gave the Pentagon time to muster sixty state-of-the-art Spurpanzer Fuchs vehicles from the German government. Also, some enterprising American soldiers in Saudi Arabia reportedly found and filled the need for better gear, swapping their M-16 bayonets on the "black market" in exchange for lighter British Mark IV protective suits and S-10 masks.

At his triumphant news conference on February 27, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf was asked why the Iraqis had not used chemical weapons. "I don't know the answer," the general replied. "I just thank God that they didn't." In the Gulf, divine providence may indeed have been America's best defense against Iraqi chemical attack. In the next war we may not be so lucky.

BEN SHERWOOD is an associate producer in the investigative unit of ABC News's "Prime Time Live."

Dr. Jekyll and Rep. Hyde.

IVORY POWER

By Jonathan Rauch

In 1988 President Ronald Reagan vetoed the Civil Rights Restoration Act, at some political risk to his party. The National Republican Senatorial Committee implored him not to veto a civil rights bill in an election year, but to no avail. The bill, Reagan said, "would vastly and unjustifiably expand the power of the federal government over the decisions and affairs of private organizations."

The veto was overridden, and the Civil Rights Restoration Act, generally known as the Grove City bill, is now law. What it says is that private colleges and universities must obey various federal anti-discrimination rules if they or their students receive any federal aid. Liberals were happy because the act unambiguously extended the reach of protective government regulation to virtually every private college in the country. For exactly the same reason, conservatives were upset. That was in 1988.

Now it's 1991, and guess who's reaching out with the long arm of the Civil Rights Restoration Act?

In March Representative Henry H. Hyde of Illinois, a stalwart conservative who opposed the Grove City bill and supported the president's veto, introduced the Collegiate Speech Protection Act of 1991. At his side was Nadine Strossen, the president of the American Civil Liberties Union. Hyde uses the Grove City law to bar any non-religious college or university from punishing a student for speech "or other communication protected from governmental regulation" by the First Amendment. In other words, students would enjoy First Amendment protection from private colleges' disciplinarians as surely as from government's would-be censors.

The ACLU supports the bill because it commendably believes, as Strossen said, that "you should be free to express even the most hateful positions." Conservatives support the bill because the people doing the speech-regulating on campus tend to be left-wing activists—people who, for example, regard an editorial cartoon opposing affirmative action, or a student's claim that homosexuality is a treatable disease, as intimidation or "verbal harassment."

And what about federal intrusiveness? "This is the one time that this can be used for the benefit of conservative students who are running scared on university campuses," says an aide to Hyde. "I'm a conservative," says Tony Zagotta, the chairman of the College Republican National Committee, which is making a cause of the Hyde bill. "I'm all for limiting the government's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

involvement. But there are some areas where you need government protection."

In other words, conservatives are against government interventionism except when they're for it. Well, this is not exactly shocking news, and a little hypocrisy may not be such a bad thing when it's applied in a good cause, and defending the principle of free speech in American private universities certainly is a good cause. But what about *requiring* that private universities defend free speech? Is that a good idea?

It is, at best, a risky idea. The lesson of the Grove City law (among others) is that turnabout is fair play. If you give liberals a policy tool, conservatives soon learn that they can use it too. And when free-speech advocates start using federal power to advance their agenda on private campuses, how long will it take before anti-"harassment" activists follow the example? Moreover, if the First Amendment must be applied to intellectual exchange at Yale and Swarthmore and Chicago, why not also, say, the Fourteenth? Should institutions that receive federal money have to offer, or even require, courses on racial sensitivity and ethnic history, so as to reverse discriminatory pro-European cultural bias? Should they have to hire proportionate numbers of minority faculty members? Should they be *required* to adopt rules protecting students from discriminatory verbal harassment, or compensating them for it?

If you think these proposals are farfetched, you aren't paying enough attention to the latest egalitarian First Amendment scholarship. This fringey but worrisome view holds that the Constitution guarantees not just free speech but equal speech; otherwise dominant groups are able to edge out oppressed ones, who are then denied their First Amendment freedoms. "[T]he First Amendment, like the Fourteenth, protects equality as well as liberty," writes Whittier College law professor Mary Ellen Gale in *The Responsive Community*. "When students or others on campus use free expression as a weapon to enforce prejudice and coerce or silence others, the supposed free market of ideas may be skewed and destroyed because some thoughts and persons never have equal access to it, because they belong to some disliked or disadvantaged group whose feelings, perceptions, and expressions are routinely discounted by those who already have market power." The new reasoning implies that the Constitution *requires* regulation of speech, at least until real equality has been achieved in the intellectual marketplace. Next stop will be a Coalition Against Verbal Violence lobbying for controls on "verbal harassment."

Not surprisingly, the leading opponent of the Hyde bill is the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. "We find this an incredible intrusion," said Richard F. Rosser, the association's president. Then again, maybe that *is* surprising. Guess where the association stood on the Grove City bill, Hyde's lever? They supported it, because they agreed with its anti-discriminatory aims. In other words, they're against government interventionism except when they're for it. Unfortunately for them, interventionism is a game that two sides can play. That's worth remembering as we think about whether to insert Congress into the campus free-speech debate.

JONATHAN RAUCH is a contributing editor of *National Journal*.

Cyprus's ignored Greek victims.

ZORBA THE MEEK

By Robert D. Kaplan

Years from now, when the relationship between Western governments, the media, and terrorism is chronicled from a historical distance—and Iraq is just one of many chapters—there will be a baleful epilogue with a simple title: "Cyprus."

Remember Cyprus, that dusty antique of an issue? In the mid-1950s, when the terrorism of Greek Cypriot extremists exploded on the Eastern Mediterranean island, Cyprus emerged in the spotlight. Lawrence Durrell, the Anglo-Irish poet and novelist, recalls in his memoir, *Bitter Lemons of Cyprus*, how his solitary life was changed overnight by the arrival of hordes of journalists. The conflict was a cousin of those in Palestine and the Indian subcontinent: Great Britain was on the way out, leaving a trail of intercommunal hostility behind. Violence between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities continued on and off for two decades. Cyprus was being governed by a moderate Greek Cypriot, Archbishop Makarios. The media paid close attention. Then, on July 20, 1974, the Turkish army invaded Cyprus in response to a coup by Greek Cypriot extremists who wanted union with Greece.

Though the extremists quickly relinquished power, the Turks launched a second invasion, breaking out of their beachhead to capture 40 percent of the island, whose population was four-fifths Greek. Two hundred thousand Greek Cypriots were made refugees: that is four out of every ten Greek Cypriots, equal to the number of Palestinian refugees after the first truce of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Two thousand Greek Cypriots remain unaccounted for to this day, many probably tortured to death.

Because the Nixon administration had a friendly attitude toward both Turkey and the mainland Greek junta, which instigated the coup by the Greek Cypriot extremists, America got blamed for the tragedy. Afterward, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger admitted that if he had had the time to read the precoup intelligence reports, he would have realized "that the situation needed atten-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion." Greek Cypriots saw Kissinger's negligence as part of a conspiracy. Cyprus—given its violent record—was thus poised for an era of anti-American terrorism.

But it never materialized. The reasons may be more cultural than political. Cyprus, though non-aligned and less than 100 miles off the Syrian coast, is far more Westernized than either Greece or Turkey, both NATO members. Cyprus has a cosmopolitan feel; the telecommunications system is the Levant's finest. Cypriots are better linguists than their mainland Greek and Turkish counterparts, and in terms of efficiency, deserve comparison with the Germans: always on time, always responding to a fax or telex. In the early 1980s, though officially non-aligned, the Greek Cypriots were more willing to give logistical aid to U.S. Marines in Lebanon than were America's NATO allies in Athens and Ankara. The Greek Cypriot terrorism of the 1950s will forever remain the enigma, not the non-terrorism of the past seventeen years. And there was another startling development: no permanent refugee camps sprang up. Within a few years all 200,000 refugees, except for those missing, were integrated into the community, with new homes and jobs.

Today there is a Turkish government in the north and an internationally recognized Greek government in the south. The atmosphere on the island is as bitter as it is divided, with a younger generation of Cypriots holding no collective memory of living together. The Turkish army controls in excess of 35 percent of Cyprus, with an occupation force estimated at more than 30,000 troops, recruited from the Anatolian interior—a circumstance that the more sophisticated Turkish Cypriots cannot be pleased about. Greek churches were blown up or converted into mosques, warehouses, and, in some cases, latrines. Archaeological sites, attesting to a Greek presence going back to the middle of the second millennium B.C., have been pillaged. Greek place names have been replaced not with their previous Ottoman Turkish names—which also bear Greek influence—but with Turkish names of Asiatic origin. Karavas, the first Greek town taken in 1974, is now Alsancak. Greek Cypriots have responded to this by being the perfect statesmen. Over the past two decades President Spiros Kyprianou and his successor since 1988, George Vassiliou, have plied the globe with a message that says, in effect: We are civilized people. We don't use violence. We lack the cruelty to keep our Greek relatives permanently in refugee camps (like the Arabs). But that does not make our tragedy any less dramatic.

This Foreign Service textbook approach has been less than a success. The last time the media—and therefore the world—gave a thought to Cyprus was in 1974. A further irony is that Cyprus has become the R&R hideaway for battle-weary correspondents needing a break from the Middle East. As the airplane approaches Cyprus's airport, the correspondents see a replica of the landscape of Israel and the West Bank: a sandbagged and divided city, Nicosia, exactly as Jerusalem was prior to 1967; and bald, stone-littered hills, distinguished by a disputed Turkish flag denoting a disputed border separating the Turkish and Greek halves of the island. But there are no refugee tents and no threats of violence—and everything works! Greek Cypriots have become dynamic capitalists, not terrorists, making money off middle-class British tourists and the business exodus from Beirut caused by the Lebanese civil war. They are victims of their own success.

Cyprus is stark proof that nihilistic violence is now the only effective way for small and powerless peoples to communicate the fact that they have a problem. No terrorism, no meaningful communication. More important: no lobbies of sympathetic experts in Washington, who have risen up the career ladder by understanding why your people have had to resort to such tactics. Any American secretary of state can ignore Cyprus because the Greek Cypriots, by eschewing terrorism, pose no destabilizing, criminal threat to Western interests in the way the Palestinians do.

Of course, there have been other factors. The vicious anti-Americanism of the former Greek prime minister, Andreas Papandreou, discouraged Washington from helping his ethnic Greek compatriots on Cyprus. But Greece now has a pro-American government, so it may be the time for the United States to start helping the Greek Cypriots. Convincing the Turks to withdraw from Cyprus while maintaining their friendship has always been enormously complicated—but not so complicated as in the days when the Soviet Union was a real superpower and neighboring Turkey quietly played Moscow off against Washington in a manner that Papandreou, with all his demagoguery, never was able to.

The collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and the Balkans, followed by the war in the Gulf, has played to Turkey's advantage. As market barriers fall in Bulgaria and other Balkan states, Turkish goods and services have started to pour in. Turkey's postwar role in the Middle East—in Iraq and Iran in particular—is going to be similarly enhanced; while across the border in the Soviet Union, Turkic peoples are pushing for self-rule. The twenty-first century in the Near East is going to be, to a large extent, a Turkish one. What better time for the Turks to off-load a debilitating occupation? Especially since Turkey's prosperity—and therefore its internal stability—will ultimately rest on admission to the European Community, for which Brussels will demand a more flexible human rights policy not only toward ethnic Kurds but toward Cyprus as well. Officially amending the "seven-to-ten" ratio to give the Turks more money might give them a further incentive to withdraw.

The Greek Cypriots are a Western people who have adopted Western ideals as a way out of occupation. If the Bush administration truly wants to demonstrate that terrorism is no longer the method of choice for winning redress of legitimate grievances in the new, post-Saddam, post-Communist era, Cyprus would be a pretty good place to start.

ROBERT D. KAPLAN, author of *Soldiers of God: With the Mujahidin in Afghanistan* (Houghton Mifflin), is writing a book on the Balkans.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The unauthorized index.

OUR TURN

By Paul Slansky

Did she sleep with Frank Sinatra? Did she smoke grass with Alfred Bloomingdale? Did she smack Patti in the face with a hairbrush?

Who cares? What matters is, we *want* to believe *all* of it. And if we can't be absolutely sure about the truth of every little detail . . . well, Ms. Kelley's *Nancy Reagan* is, after all, a portrait of a woman whose life has been a shrine to falsity.

"You get back what you give out," Nancy Reagan is fond of saying, and guess what? She's right! So to all of you who feel you've earned a guilt-free wallow, I say, let's get to the good parts.

Davis, Edith Prescott Luckett
daughter Nancy sent to live with relatives by, 31-35
and policy of not allowing "nigrahs" in her home, 39-40
vulgarity of, 22, 36, 37, 41, 113-14, 237, 267, 268
Davis, Loyal
adopts wife Edith's daughter, 42-43
claims not to trust adopted daughter, 376
hatred of Catholics of, 39
use of "nigger" and "kike" by, 39, 41
Davis, Patti
is beaten in face with hairbrush by mother, 110
and mother's claim that birth was difficult because "I had hooked my fingers around my mother's ribs, thwarting all her attempts to push me from her womb," 110
Queen Elizabeth
rejects Michael Deaver's request that she allow herself to be filmed eating breakfast with Nancy Reagan, 386-87
Reagan, Maureen
Reagans' failure to attend wedding of, 343
Reagan, Michael
Reagans' failure to attend wedding of, 202
Secret Service reports kleptomania of, 352-53
Reagan, Nancy Davis
affair with MGM casting chief Benny Thau of, 70-72, 74-75, 94, 538-39
ambassadors chosen by, 401-2
is assessed by high school classmate as "unbearable then, just unbearable," 43
is assessed by Philip Dunne as looking like "a basilisk," 125
is assessed by Richard Nixon as "a bitch," 202
is assessed by second cousin as "a dreadful woman without a thought in her head . . . a frozen face," 205, 410
is assessed by Frank Sinatra as "a dope with fat ankles who could never make it as an actress," 123
is assessed by Ann Sothern as "rather devious," 73
berates aide in public by saying "I wish I could pull a shade down in front of your face," 363
berates Kirk Douglas's 5-year-old son for booing her Goldwater bumper sticker, 132
best friend Betsy Bloomingdale conserves energy by telling servants "not to turn on the self-cleaning oven until after seven in the evening," 152
best friend Betsy Bloomingdale pleads guilty to altering customs invoice, 240
best friend's husband whips out joint for Reagans to sample, 176-77, 548-49
betrayal of Phoenix House by, 472-80
blames agents for husband's failure to get good movie offers, 98
blames bad press on women reporters envious of her thinness, 162
blames press for "misinterpreting" her memoir, 528
buys new china, 313-15
comes to despise Michael ("Lord of the Chamberpot") Deaver, 227, 435-36, 490-91
controls husband's schedule, 335, 431-32, 443-44, 487-88
controls White House photos, 310, 438
crack bust attended by, 523-24
decides not to pose for Blackglama ad, 523
demands firing of William Casey, 340, 485
demands firing of Margaret Heckler, 340, 484
demands firing of Lyn Nofziger, 167
demands firing of Donald Regan, 340, 483, 485-486, 488-89
demands firing of John Sears, 263-64
demands firing of volunteer campaign worker, 227
denials of wealth by, 276-77
detestation by British press of, 346-48
disadvantaged kids exploited by, 319-20, 346, 410
eagerness to move into governor's mansion early of, 145-46, 299
eagerness to move into White House early of, 298-99
eavesdrops on children, 131
and efforts to fool Joan Didion into thinking she was a good mother, 161-62
and efforts to have Michael Reagan shipped to Vietnam, 146
and efforts to jail drivers whose cars sported anti-Reagan bumper stickers, 172
and efforts to jail Eldridge Cleaver for mouthing profanities about her husband, 171
and efforts to jail student who wrote that he hoped Reagan would die of gunshot wound, 338
enlists the aid of Mafia lawyer, 178
extols the joys of grandparenthood, 464, 568
eyelift of, 139
facelifts of, 496
failure to extort honorary degree from Smith College of, 323-24
and fear that son's dance career meant he was gay, 245-48
fellatio skills of, 539-40
finds dead roses in bouquet sent by Nixon, 202
"the gaze" defended by, 252-53
"the gaze" employed in college by, 54
gets Clairol to pay for White House beauty salon, 291-92
gift recycling of, 353-55, 357-58
gives grandson as birthday present a teddy bear he'd previously left at White House, 354-55
gives social secretary unwrapped perfume sample for Christmas, 357-58
gives stepdaughter wedding present of swizzle sticks, 354
grating voice of, 216
gripes that infant daughter wouldn't swallow beans, 109, 230
gushes about all the "beautiful white people" at rally, 259
husband treated like child by, 445-46, 527
husband treated like pet dog by, 445, 527
idolatry of Duchess of Windsor of, 183
idolatry of Jacqueline Onassis of, 157, 399-401, 427-28
ignores aunt's funeral, 114, 525
ignores dying father, 206-8
ignores grandmother's funeral, 114, 525
ignores Lyn Nofziger's daughter's funeral, 520
ignores state dinner guest of honor because she'd rather talk to Frank Sinatra, 362-63
kicks husband in keister, 417
kisses son fully on mouth, 325
lack of enthusiasm for daughter's writing of, 455
lack of star quality of, 71, 74, 81, 93-94
lies about age, 20, 72, 95
lies about father, 20, 30
lies about free clothes, 294, 364-67, 501-3
lies about husband's health, 232, 438-42

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lies about husband's naps, 233
loathing for Barbara Bush of, 273, 394, 403, 509
loathing for George Bush of, 258, 270, 273, 403, 506-9
loathing for Geraldine Ferraro of, 421
loathing for Jane Fonda of, 194-95
loathing for Betty Ford of, 218, 241, 243, 474
loathing for Raisa Gorbachev of, 452-53, 496-500, 575
loathing for Barbara Sinatra of, 362
loathing for stepchildren of, 111-12, 135-36, 146, 221-25, 256, 274-75, 412, 415-16, 464-65
loathing for Jane Wyman of, 111, 226, 465
miscellaneous lies, deceptions, and hypocrisies of, 20, 32, 46, 58, 89, 109, 147, 153, 168, 174, 207, 209, 216, 232, 233, 254, 268, 299, 370-71, 390-91, 392, 393, 405, 415-16, 442, 447, 462, 464, 487, 493-94, 498, 508, 515
miscellaneous rudenesses of, 90, 124, 131, 132, 136, 144, 145, 152, 154, 161, 168, 173, 184, 204-5, 251, 252, 274-75, 294, 299, 347, 356-57, 362, 363, 371, 403-4, 511, 546, 565
muses about whether Duke of Windsor would campaign for her husband, 183
nose job of, 53
obsession with royalty of, 342-48, 384-88
as owner of "tiny little gun," 302-3
is photographed looking annoyed when husband cuts in during dance with Frank Sinatra, 310-11
portrays husband as dim-witted idiot in memoir, 527-28
promiscuity of, 66, 70, 77, 89, 287, 327, 539
rarity of calls to parents by, 462
is recalled as "always hollering about some hippie who'd just called the governor a pig," 172
refuses to allow backyard party guests inside to use bathroom, 154
refuses to cancel November 1963 party "just because John F. Kennedy died," 129, 401
refuses to contribute money for grandmother's headstone, 114
refuses to invite brain-damaged Jim Brady to White House functions until she hears she's going to be publicly attacked for it, 337
refuses to live in governor's mansion, 143-45, 153
refuses to pay for extra nursing care for beloved father, 375-76
reluctance to pay for anything of, 114, 116, 155, 156, 160, 288-96, 310, 326, 355, 364, 431, 477, 573
removes stepchildren from husband's campaign bio, 146
and Frank Sinatra's Chicago hotel suite, 188
and Frank Sinatra's secret White House visits during which she was not to be disturbed for anything, not even a call from her husband, 311-12
is snidely referred to as "the Hairdo with Anxiety," 316
spies on children through Secret Service, 351-52
strong belief in the law of retribution of, 73, 281, 526
telephonic nagging of, 130, 131, 141, 146, 167, 171, 176, 209, 211, 227, 338
tells husband what to say and do, 258, 264, 418-19, 445-46, 449, 458, 517
tendency to topple over of, 405-6
travels with two hairdressers in case one gets sick, 409
tries to find "cheapest" nursing home because "After all, it's just Ronnie's mother," 116
unfortunate legs of, 44-45, 282-83, 405
Reagan, Ronald Prescott
and affair with Kris Harmon Nelson, 219-21
boasts of cashing in on father's presidency, 466-67
Reagan, Ronald Wilson
is assessed by Doris Lilly as "nothing memorable" sexually, 86
is assessed by Jane Wyman as "about as good in bed as he was on the screen," 84
begins reading *everything he says* from index cards, 417-18
blames his role as SAG president for failure to get good movie offers, 98
blames his TV work for failure to get good movie offers, 106
cashes in majorly on presidency, 518-23
charges daughter $481 interest on loan, 276
commits adultery with teenager, 175
date rape by, 91-92
is described as "absolutely gaga," 450
dyed hair of, 292, 300
facelifts of, 496
and first wife's departure because "I just couldn't stand to watch that damned *Kings Row* one more time," 84
and first wife's suggestion that he "shut up and go shit in your hat," 84
fondness for ball-breaking women of, 446
fondness for jokes about AIDS of, 468
fondness for mimicking homosexuals of, 167, 260, 468
fondness for racist jokes of, 260
gets angry enough to tell wife to shut up, 444
grabs phone out of wife's hand and rips it from wall, 447
lobbies for tax break for film stars, 118
miscellaneous gaffes of, 418
pays visit to girlfriend while wife gives birth, 96
poor reaction to girlfriends' pregnancies by, 88, 91, 96
proposes to woman who rejects him but keeps engagement present, 90
pulls himself away from watching TV long enough to pose for photos showing him hard at work, 437-38
requests wife's approval of summit agenda, 451
self-image as stud of, 85-86
Sinatra, Frank
loathing for Reagans of, 123
sucking up to Reagans by, 306-8, 334, 336, 362
Zipkin, Jerry
screams and flaps his arms, 295

PAUL SLANSKY is the author of *The Clothes Have No Emperor* (Simon and Schuster), a definitive chronology of the Reagan era.

Cuomo's abortion contortion.

DEAD END

By Andrew Sullivan

Mario Cuomo's September 1984 speech on abortion at Notre Dame University is second only to his convention keynote address of the same year in the lore surrounding the philosophical prowess of the governor of New York. Some likened the Notre Dame speech to John F. Kennedy's 1960 address to Protestant ministers in Houston on the role of Catholics in American public life. THE NEW REPUBLIC said it contained a "seriousness and depth rarely seen in the American political arena." A *National Review* writer called it "brilliant." Although criticisms were made at the time, they failed to stick. The tour de force largely ended the abortion issue as a major problem in Mario Cuomo's career.

It shouldn't have. In fact, the speech is a work of evasion, and so muddled on so pressing a moral matter that it casts doubt on Cuomo's seriousness both as an intellectual and as a politician. It glosses over its own central contradiction, finds a solution where there is only an im-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passe. Cuomo's singular achievement may in fact have been to have staked out the only truly incoherent position imaginable for a Catholic politician on abortion.

Cuomo argues in his speech that though as a Catholic he accepts the Church's teaching that abortion is wrong, as a politician in a pluralist society he upholds the right of others to abort. He argues that although he is bound as a Catholic to believe the Church's teaching, he can differ from the Church on the practical response to such a teaching, which is a matter of prudential political judgment, and not of ecclesiastical obedience.

The problem with the position is simple: its private-Catholic/public-pluralist position makes some sense for almost any other moral issue for Catholics *except* abortion. It's possible, for example, for a Catholic to hold that, say, divorce is wrong but not wish to make it illegal, out of a respect for the right of others to choose differently. The upshot of such a stance, after all, is not so bad: at worst a lowering of public morals, at best an affirmation of the good of free moral choice.

With abortion, however, this balance between public and private goes awry. To accept the Church's position on abortion is to believe that abortion is the taking of human life, a somewhat more drastic event than the breakup of a marriage. In his Notre Dame speech, Cuomo states that he accepts this position in the clearest terms:

> As Catholics, my wife and I were enjoined never to use abortion to destroy the life we created, and we never have. We thought Church doctrine was clear on this, and—more than that—both of us felt it in full agreement with what our hearts and our consciences told us. For me, life or fetal life in the womb should be protected. . . . At the very least . . . the full potential of human life is there. That . . . by itself should demand respect, caution, indeed . . . reverence.

For a Catholic holding this belief, merely enforcing the public laws as a public servant, while arguing for their reversal, is hard enough. But actually *favoring* legal abortion, and the provision of public funds for it, must mean consciously tolerating the taking of millions of human lives as a normal occurrence in American society. And this is Cuomo's position. At times he has gone even further than this. He recently joined eight governors in an amicus brief to the Supreme Court that implicitly asked the Court not to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade*. He ducked, in a recent interchange with the editors of the liberal Catholic journal *Commonweal*, an invitation to support a ban on third trimester abortions, preferring to say that the ethical and legal implications of medical data "be explored." And he has made statements, subsequently qualified, that, as a man, he has no right to discuss abortion at all.

Cuomo recognizes that he is free to act otherwise, to argue democratically against abortion according to his own convictions. But in the Notre Dame speech, he adds: "But should I? Is it helpful? Is it essential to human dignity? Does it promote harmony and understanding? Or does it divide us so fundamentally that it threatens our ability to function as a pluralistic community?" There is a virtue, to be sure, in harmony—and a Catholic virtue at that. But could it possibly outweigh what Cuomo himself must believe is legal homicide? Cuomo, in short, says he'd never "destroy life" himself (his words) but actively supports the right of others to do so, in order to avoid public discord. Compare this with the clarity of his opposition to the death penalty, where he has vetoed, to public uproar, capital punishment laws passed by majorities in both houses of the New York legislature, and favored by a majority of New York voters.

None of this contortion, of course, is necessary. Cuomo could, for example, say he doesn't believe abortion *is* the taking of life. He could say he doesn't believe it's homicide; or that "life" is at stake, but a "person" does not exist until a certain number of weeks of pregnancy. Or he could simply say he's so deeply troubled by the issue that he's prepared to give others the benefit of the doubt. All of these views might fit with his pro-choice position. For this, he would doubtless receive sympathy from his fellow Catholics. Instead, he chooses to affirm the Church's view that abortion is life-taking and yet be in favor of laws that permit it.

A college student raised this problem in an interview in the Catholic Columbia undergraduate magazine, *Newman Journal*, in the spring of 1988. At one point in the dialogue, Cuomo claims the bishops don't mandate the same obedience to the teaching on birth control as they do on abortion, which prompts the reply:

> Newman Journal: It's not the same.
> Mario Cuomo: Well, why is it not the same?
> NJ: Well, one is murder.
> MC: No, murder is a word that doesn't count. Murder is a civil word and the Supreme Court says it's not murder. So you can't do it with the word "murder."
> NJ: Well, the Church teaches that it's a taking of a life and therefore the violation of the natural law.
> MC: Well, that's what you teach about birth control. You don't teach that there is a different order of seriousness. Then they get all upset on that point. Now, I may have my theology wrong but I don't think so. . . .

The truth is, of course, that Cuomo does have his theology wrong. The Church does teach that there is an order of seriousness in breaches of natural law, homicide being far graver than the use of condoms.

How did the governor manage to avoid confronting this issue in his Notre Dame speech? By two rhetorical sleights of hand. First, he plays down his belief in the public doctrine of the Church on abortion. Rather than saying that he actually "believes" in the teaching of the Church on abortion, he uses the term "accept." His "belief" in the sin of abortion is reserved entirely for himself, in a firmly private context.

Second, Cuomo faces up to the central dilemma of legal killing once—and rebuts it with an irrelevance. He admits at one point that "abortion is treated differently" by the Church than other social evils:

> Abortion is a "matter of life and death," and degree counts. But the differences in approach reveal a truth, I think, that is not well enough perceived by Catholics and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

therefore still further complicates the process for us. That is, while we always owe our bishops' words respectful attention and careful consideration, the question whether to engage the political system in a struggle to have it adopt certain articles of our belief as public morality, is not a matter of doctrine: it is a matter of prudential political argument.

This is a decent point. The Church defers to lay people in matters of prudential political judgment. The trouble is, Cuomo's argument doesn't actually tackle the question raised. The issue is whether the fact that Catholics believe abortion is homicide short-circuits much political judgment on what to do about it. And surely it does. There cannot be much debate among Catholics over whether killing should be legal or not. There may be differences over tactics, to be sure: making abortion illegal, for example, could be the last part of a broad social, educational, economic, and spiritual strategy to end it. But the *goal* is unmistakable. Yet it is precisely on this goal—of ultimately banning abortion—that Cuomo is silent. And on making it illegal now, he's actively opposed.

No one's pretending, of course, that this is an easy problem for a Catholic politician to grapple with, and Cuomo deserves respect for engaging with it in public. What he shouldn't get away with, however, is the impression of having made a definitive contribution to the subject, when in reality he hasn't confronted the central issue at all. ●

Cuomo's New York story.

BROKEN RECORD

By Morton Kondracke

It's vaguely known around the country that New York state is in bad financial shape right now—it has a $6.5 billion budget shortfall and the third-worst bond rating of any state. Governor Mario Cuomo and his supporters argue that thirty-one governors representing 85 percent of the population are in much the same fix, temporary victims of the national recession. Yet a close examination of Cuomo's eight-year record as governor indicates that New York's current woes are the result not just of the recession and Reagan-era cutbacks, but also of chronic bad management. And Mario Cuomo shares much of the blame.

Although Cuomo's office periodically sends out exhaustive lists of his administration's achievements, his only unquestioned success is in public works: infrastructure improvement and prison construction. Cuomo has rebuilt 14,000 miles of highways and 3,000 bridges, and he has nearly doubled the number of prison spaces in the state, almost all of the new slots occupied by drug offenders. Cuomo boasts that drug convictions have tripled since he came to office, although the state's violent crime rate has climbed by 24 percent, slightly ahead of the national average. The number of murders in the state went up by 14.7 percent from 1983 to 1989, 3.4 percent ahead of the national rate. Last year it went up by another 13 percent, to 2,548. Meanwhile, only 284 persons were jailed for murder.

Cuomo has annually proposed reforms such a greater equalization of state aid to local school districts. He has passed some landmark legislation, including a tough ethics law and the Liberty Scholarships program, which will guarantee (when there's money to fund it) that no qualified poor child will miss out on a college education. He has skillfully handled the state's various racial crises. He led and won the 1986 fight to maintain federal deductibility of state and local taxes. He increased state aid to local governments during the early 1980s, when federal budget cuts were hitting home. And he has had to cope with the multiple pathologies of New York City, including AIDS, drugs, crime, and dependency.

Yet there's no area of state government in which Cuomo has made himself a consistent national pioneer—certainly not education, welfare reform, or government organization. While he paints grand rhetorical visions, both supporters and critics describe him as an "incrementalist," adding and subtracting programs and money at the margins as budgets and political pressures permit. Cuomo did sponsor a path-breaking 1986 welfare study by Harvard's David Ellwood and Mary Jo Bane. The study recommended dropping recipients from public assistance after two or three years, during which they'd get intensive job training and get placed in jobs with decent wages. The state would also help force missing fathers to pay child support. According to Ellwood and others, however, Cuomo declined to endorse the report, apparently fearing criticism of its mandatory work provisions. In an interview, Cuomo declared it "a provable falsehood" that he distanced himself from the report and demanded to know the names of persons asserting that he had. Yet a *New York Times* account at the time said that Cuomo "stopped short of endorsing it" and quoted his press secretary as saying that Cuomo planned to forward the report to President Reagan, but not as Cuomo's own recommendations.

Under the rubric of the "Decade of the Child," Cuomo did create an innovative children's health insurance program and added significantly to funding for prenatal and foster care. "We spend more money on children than any other state," says Eve Brooks of Statewide Youth Advocacy, a public interest group. "Unfortunately, the money goes to a lot of different categorical programs that have never been molded into a unified system. Parents who want help are forced to run around from one agency to another. The adminis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GOT OPINIONS?
LET US KNOW.

You probably wouldn't be a *New Republic* reader if you didn't have opinions—about the magazine and the issues raised in it.

And now there's a way to interact more directly with *TNR*, a way to get your views—or your gripes—off your chest and on the record.

It's **The New Republic Sound Off Line**: A new 900 telephone service that gives you three options:

1. Sound off to the editors of *The New Republic*. Maybe you don't have the time to write a letter to the editor. Phone in your views instead. Record your opinion, pro or con, about anything you read in the magazine, and we'll consider every message for inclusion in the weekly correspondence column.

2. Have your say about *TNR*'s editorial stance. Each week, we'll pick a question from an issue covered in our lead editorial. You can record your opinion with a vote on that week's critical topic (updated every Saturday morning). The results will appear in a subsequent issue.

3. Listen to the editors of *The New Republic* and *National Review* debate the day's issues on "Headline Exchange." This independently produced five-minute program can also be heard on National Public Radio in selected markets. (Updated every day at 6:00 PM, EST.)

Make your opinions a matter of record.

Each call costs $1.25 per minute, billed to your phone bill. Net proceeds from **The New Republic Sound Off Line** are used to fund editorial internships and other special editorial projects.

1-900-726-6671

THE NEW REPUBLIC

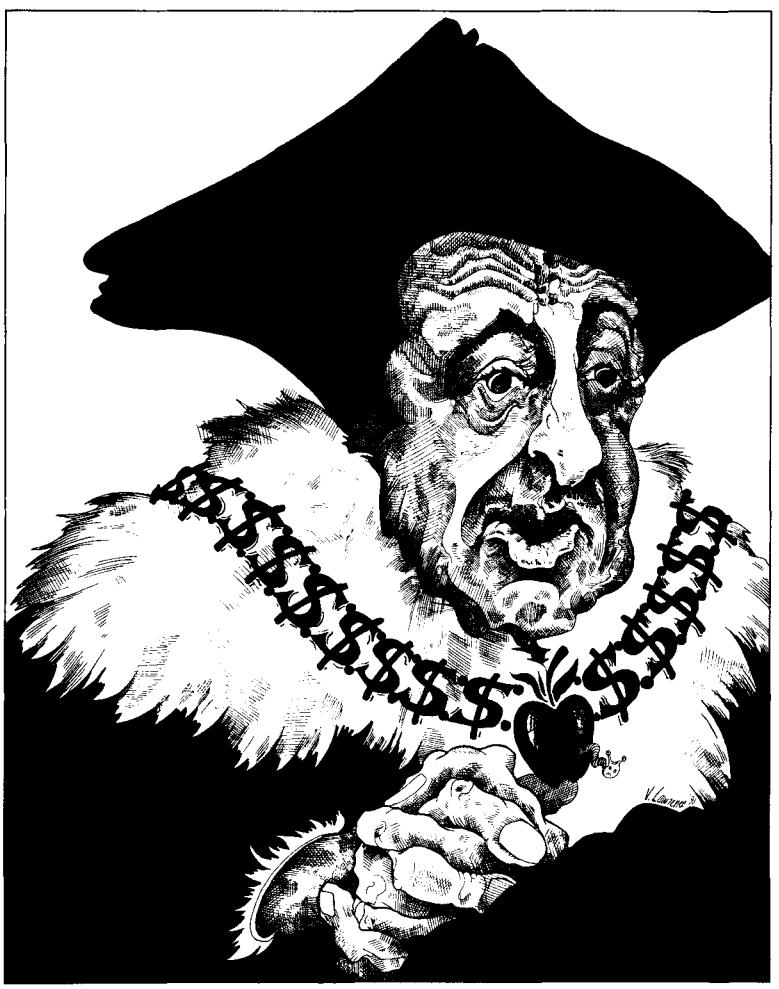
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tration says it is looking into this, but it has never done anything about it. It takes political courage because each of the programs has a political constituency."

It's a consistent refrain among Cuomo-watchers (most of whom refuse to be quoted by name) that Cuomo is not much interested in the details of policy, tries to silence critics rather than listen to them, and has failed to attract or keep first-rate subordinates. He inherited a cadre of able aides from the administration of his predecessor, Hugh Carey, but (except for the health and prisons commissioners) all left, often because the new governor insisted on hogging power and credit for himself. "He's incredibly manipulative and cruel," says one esteemed former agency head. "He rules by fear."

Whereas governors such as Tom Kean of New Jersey and Bill Clinton of Arkansas have made names for themselves as school reformers, Cuomo's contribution to education has been largely to increase funding (up 30 percent in real terms), raise teacher salaries (to an average of $38,900, third-highest in the nation), and add administrators (by nearly 10 percent, while total enrollment has fallen by 5 percent). He is on no one's list (except his own) as a reformer. One of America's leading experiments in parental school choice is under way in East Harlem, but Cuomo had nothing to do with starting the program. Nor has he instituted alternative certification of teachers or rigorous statewide accountability for school and teacher performance. Critics say that's because the teachers' unions are among Cuomo's most ardent supporters, but even some top union officials say they can't think of any bold initiatives that Cuomo has undertaken. Meanwhile, average SAT scores dropped eight points from 1983 to 1990, and the graduation rate dropped by 2 percent. New York ranks forty-fifth among the fifty states in the SATs and forty-fourth in its graduation rate.

Having dramatically increased school funding and aid to localities, Cuomo now finds himself forced to chop them back (by $400 million for New York City alone) to close his $6.5 billion fiscal 1992 shortfall. He has also proposed dismissing 5,200 current state workers and reducing Medicaid to achieve total spending cuts of $4.5 billion, while raising $1.5 billion in revenues by increasing gasoline taxes and canceling a scheduled income tax cut. The Cuomo plan is the focus of furious battling in Albany, as liberal Democrats in the state Assembly call for higher income taxes and fewer cuts, and Republicans in the state Senate issue unspecified demands for still lower taxes and more spending cuts. A state budget was supposed to be enacted by April 1, but the wrangling may go on for weeks to come, while unfunded social service contractors are forced to close and local governments have to borrow to tide themselves over.



MARIO CUOMO BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

"This budget shows what a hard-headed pragmatist he is," says Meyer Frucher, a former state official under Cuomo and Carey. But as critics point out, this is only the most recent case of late budgets and red ink. States may not be able to print money, but New York can borrow, pay its bills late, and juggle its books, and it has been doing so for years. When Cuomo became governor in 1983, he faced a shortfall of $2 billion, which he cut back to $450 million with tax increases and spending cuts. Over most of the following eight years, the state's economy boomed—for which Cuomo takes credit, while denying any to the Republicans in charge of the national economy in Washington. Personal income rose 54 percent between 1983 and 1990, and state spending rose by almost exactly the same percentage, according to the Citizens Budget Commission.

Instead of matching spending with revenues during those fat years, though, the state ran deficits in all except 1986 and 1987, when Congress's enactment of tax reform produced a huge revenue windfall. Cuomo recommended an income tax cut, but prudently urged that most of the windfall be deposited in a "sunny day" fund. His plans were torpedoed in the state legislature, however, as Democrats and Republicans outbid each

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cuomophobia

It's no secret how President Bush's re-election team plans to thwart Mario Cuomo if he's the Democratic presidential nominee in 1992. The Republican strategy has three parts. First, Cuomo's record (taxes, spending, crime, SAT scores, etc.) as governor of New York gets a thorough going-over. Second, efforts are made to goad the thin-skinned Cuomo into blowing up at the press, Bush, or someone else, and in public. Third, Bush hovers out of harm's way and lets surrogates swap daily barbs with Cuomo.

That makes beating Cuomo sound easy. It may not be. In fact, there are two schools in the Bush camp on this, Atwater versus Ailes. Lee Atwater, the late Republican national chairman, told associates that all they need to do is flesh out Cuomo's identity as a "New York liberal" and the race is over. John Sununu, the White House chief of staff and de facto campaign manager, tilts toward this school. On the other hand, Bush's media consultant, Roger Ailes, and other Republican strategists with New York experience—Roger Stone, John Buckley, Jeff Bell—believe that Cuomo is formidable, probably the strongest Democratic foe. But still beatable. Ailes has the advantage of having tangled with Cuomo before. He did TV spots for Cuomo's GOP opponent for governor in 1982, Lewis Lehrman. Ailes knows how tough and resourceful Cuomo can be.

For Bush, the best of all campaigns would include rough treatment of Cuomo by Democratic presidential rivals in the primaries. "There's a potential double whammy out there," says Rich Bond, a Washington lobbyist and former Bush aide. Virginia Governor Douglas Wilder, who's officially exploring a presidential bid, might deliver the first hit. He's already allowed his chief adviser, state Democratic chairman Paul Goldman, to zing Cuomo repeatedly. Last summer Goldman asked in his monthly "Demo Memo" (sent to all Democratic National Committee members) whether Cuomo would leave New York Mayor David Dinkins "twisting in the wind" on his budget. That prompted a call to Goldman from a Cuomo aide, warning him to stay out of New York affairs. In November, after Cuomo endorsed a capital gains tax cut tied to an income tax hike, Goldman dubbed him "a Wall Street Democrat." Cuomo responded angrily on a television talk show, and New York Democratic chairman John Marino shot off a letter of complaint to Wilder. Republicans would like to see more Democratic sniping like this in 1992.

Republicans figure Cuomo's record is vulnerable for two reasons: it's not impressive, and Cuomo hasn't managed to make it seem so. His current tack is to blame state problems on the cutback in federal aid. That's not the sort of soaring tale that governors running for president normally tell. Ronald Reagan touted his tenure as a citizen-politician in Sacramento who slashed welfare. Jimmy Carter played up his New South image as the guy who hung Martin Luther King's picture in the statehouse and applied zero-based budgeting. Michael Dukakis had the Massachusetts Miracle. Cuomo has nothing comparable. Still, "there's something about Cuomo that's uplifting," says Democratic consultant David Garth. When Cuomo holds forth about values or philosophy, he's enormously appealing. "If he establishes the agenda and talks about his vision, he'll come across very well," insists Herbert London, the Conservative Party candidate for governor last year.

Bushies aim to keep the campaign earthbound, lashing Cuomo's record to him like, in Stone's phrase, "a steamer trunk." Ailes suggested as a theme for the Bush campaign: "If you'd like your state to be like New York, Cuomo's your man." Stone says, "It's one thing to say we increased taxes but improved services. It's something else to say we cut services but didn't raise taxes. Cuomo can say neither. He raised taxes and services deteriorated."

The death penalty and foreign policy loom large in the Bush scheme. Though Cuomo argues the case against capital punishment eloquently, he hasn't made his position popular—far from it. Republicans also intend to push a new death penalty bill through the state legislature this year (with Democratic support) and force another Cuomo veto. This is critical because Cuomo is not vulnerable on other values issues (family, religion, flag). "The death penalty is the only clear shot you get at Cuomo on values," concedes Buckley. On foreign policy, Republicans will play up Cuomo's lack of experience, especially his ill-conceived comments on the Persian Gulf crisis. In a speech last November in Fresno, California, Cuomo said Bush should "try to negotiate our way out" by giving Iraq a small chunk of Kuwait plus some oil fields. Republicans have scoured California in search of a videotape of the speech, but they haven't found one. But they have *The Los Angeles Times* report by Ronald Brownstein.

Bushies suspect Cuomo will be unnerved by the pace and fury of a general election campaign. At least they hope he will be. "It's one thing to intellectualize the process," says Bond. "It's another to have the bullets whizzing by your head. He's a virgin in a glass house. He's never been in a television point-counterpoint battle." Cuomo had a walk in his two re-elections. His opponents didn't have the money for TV ads attacking him. If negative spots fail to cause Cuomo to erupt, Republicans will try other tactics. "What you've got to do is crawl under his fingernails," says London. Ailes is good at provoking Cuomo. Other Republicans—Sununu and Jack Kemp, for instance—are bound to try. "He won't blow up as easily as in the past," Ailes says. "But in the end he'll show his true colors—the dark side of Mario."

Maybe he will, maybe he won't. In truth, most Bush strategists respect Cuomo's skill as a communicator. They'll tell you he's smart, quick on his feet, relentless on the offensive, the best class warrior in American politics. Most important, he's not another Dukakis. In 1988 Bush was the mouthpiece for some of the most vigorous attacks on Dukakis. Dukakis often didn't respond. Or he fired back lamely. Against Cuomo, Bush wouldn't be so bold. Cuomo is too good a counterpuncher. "There's no secret plan, no silver bullet," says Stone. "You use tax-crime-fiscal issues. You use foreign policy. And you stay out of range."

FRED BARNES

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other to enlarge the tax cut—which Cuomo acceded to and later claimed credit for. In 1988, following the 1987 stock market crash and with a deficit looming again, the legislature and Cuomo emptied the fund to fill the gap. By 1990 the state's all-funds deficit was up to $1.1 billion, and the state's accumulated operating deficit is now estimated at $5.5 billion.

A raucous debate rages among liberals and conservatives over whether the state's fiscal problems stem from too little taxation or too much spending. It's hard not to side with the conservatives on the merits. By any measure, New York is one of the highest taxing and spending states in the nation. According to the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, a federal agency, since the mid-1970s New York has been collecting about 16.5 percent of the state's personal income in all forms of state and local taxes, a percentage second only to Alaska's and more than 5 percent higher than for other populous states such as Illinois, California, Massachusetts, or New Jersey.

According to ACIR, New York is highest of all the states in individual income taxation, second in corporate taxation, and about at the national average in sales and other regressive tax categories. Various studies have shown that high-tax, high-spending states tend to lose population and jobs to low-tax states, and New York is losing both, relatively speaking. Even in the 1980s, when payroll jobs rose nationally by 22.9 percent, New York's growth lagged at 14.7 percent. Cuomo did not significantly worsen the state's taxing and spending patterns, but neither did he improve them. State spending represented 12.3 percent of personal income in his first year in office, and 12.9 percent last year. State spending exceeded the inflation rate by an average of 3.4 percent per year.

Without taking sides in the battle over how it should be done, the Citizens Budget Commission and other groups have been urging for years that the state government balance taxing with spending in order to avoid chronic deficits. Instead, according to the CBC's Cynthia Green, Cuomo and the legislature have resorted to "one-shots and gimmicks" to fill up deficits and have failed even to consider structural reform. The gimmicks have included moving important departments of government out of the state's general fund to make it look smaller and tapping the state's myriad special funds and independent authorities for cash, often through complex asset sales and refinancing schemes that are certain to expand the state's long-term indebtedness. Cuomo told me that he is "way ahead of the faddists" in privatizing government functions, but CBC officials say that Cuomo's selling off of prisons and highways to off-budget state agencies, which then float bonds to pay for them, is a gimmick to cut operating deficits.

For years experts have urged that New York reform its government processes. Cuomo himself has often recommended use of health maintenance organizations to control Medicaid costs and improve medical care for the poor, but the idea has been blocked in the legislature and he has never pushed it. It's often been suggested (lately by his 1990 Conservative Party opponent, Herb London) that tuition at state universities be means-tested (now it's a flat $1,650, whereas per-student costs are $13,500), but Cuomo has merely recommended a $500 increase for everyone. With New York City in perilous financial condition, it's also been suggested that the state take over its university system and hospitals. The idea is merely being studied. And Cuomo flatly refuses to get the state involved in selecting sites for waste disposal.

Some longtime Cuomo critics think they see in this year's stringent budget—with its three-to-one ratio of spending cuts to tax increases—a fundamental change in his attitude about what government should and shouldn't do. Characteristically, though, Cuomo rejects that notion: "I have never changed my priorities or my attitude about government," he said. "What's changed is the failure of the national economy and federal policy. I am cutting programs because I have no choice. To raise taxes would be a competitive disaster."

Cuomo supporters blame the state legislature (as well as Washington) for many of the state's problems, including the annual deficits. It's true that Washington has cut aid to the state by 14.6 percent since 1983, while adding Medicaid responsibilities. And the legislature is a stumbling block to fiscal responsibility. If the Democrats propose a benefit for New York City, the Republicans want the same for the suburbs and upstate, while simultaneously arguing for tax cuts. Cuomo has sought to steer a middle course, in keeping with his sometime self-description as a "pragmatic progressive," but has found it next to impossible to conquer or co-opt the two legislative houses.

Why hasn't the man whom his own staff members fear been able to intimidate the legislature? To begin with, the Assembly speaker and Senate majority leader have almost absolute power over members' committee assignments and the fate of their pet projects. But Cuomo also doesn't try too hard. According to Assembly Speaker Mel Miller, the governor rarely schmoozes with individual legislators and in five years has yet to show up at a fund-raiser for Democratic Assembly candidates. In 1990 he did work (unsuccessfully) to turn the state Senate Democratic, but not to the extent of sharing his own $4 million campaign surplus with other candidates.

Even supporters say that his stinginess with his campaign treasury was responsible for the embarrassing 53 percent support he garnered last November against two weak opponents. Now Cuomo's popularity is plummeting—from a high of 77 percent in a January 1988 Marist Poll, to 48 percent last month. According to Miller, a private poll for state Assembly Democrats shows Cuomo's approval rating at 28 percent. This is not a great platform from which to take the White House. On the other hand, it explains why Cuomo might like to get out of Albany. ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CUOMO VADIS?

By Sidney Blumenthal

The political landscape is barren and windswept. A mournful silence reigns in the Democratic redoubts. If the Democratic primary were held in New Hampshire today, according to a recent poll, the winner would be George Bush. Up the Hudson River, in a soot-covered industrial town, within a neo-Gothic pile of five-foot-thick gray mason stones and red tile spires, is a chamber of dark, polished wood—the hallowed spot once occupied by Franklin D. Roosevelt. In the chair of the governor of New York sits a man with deep lines in his face.

Mario Cuomo is besieged. The recession, which has brought about a steep decline in state revenues, stretches unendingly before him. He must slash $6 billion to balance his budget. His embrace of austerity and his opposition to a progressive tax increase he thinks would only accelerate an exodus of business from his state have put him in painful conflict with his own famous principles. His popularity, along with all the other numbers, is falling fast, bottoming below 50 percent.

To be sure, the picture of a man alone, facing nothing but rising difficulties, is not without its consolations. It fits his self-image as the lonely avatar of virtue. What would be an impassable barrier to normal politicians might be, to him, an invitation.

But to those who tell him to run for president, Cuomo says routinely that he has no plans to make plans.

"Don't run," I say.

"Why?" replies Cuomo. "Why would you tell me don't run?"

From the beginning of his career, Mario the contrarian has often bought when everyone was selling. He has gotten to where he is by taking on a series of hierarchies, not by making himself agreeable enough to be promoted by them. He trampled upon the party regulars who tried to send him back to Queens in humiliation. He pronounced his own conclusions on public policy contrary to those of conservative bishops, thereby demonstrating a point, especially crucial to Catholic voters, that is apart from religion: that he (and they) are infallibly American. But a common image of him outside of New York is as the personification of the traditional, custodial Democrat who repeats the party's ancient dogmas as if they were the Lord's Prayer. "I laugh," he says, hearing this description. "I've gotten so used to superficiality in analysis, it amuses me."

Cuomo's intensely felt resentment against entrenched establishments is at the heart of his contrarianism. In his imaginary dialogues, his opponents are always "they." The Wall Street law firms that denied his applications for employment after he finished first in his class at St. John's, the white-shoe characters like George Bush, and Republicans as a group are the main "they." But the Church and the party that have tried to impose their fiat on him are also fused into the corporate "they."

If "they" are indeed faced with a 1992 Cuomo candidacy, the Republican strategy, almost certainly, will be to turn him into the embodiment of the decline of the Democratic Party and New York City at the hands of liberal elites. But the prospectus for this negative campaign neglects Cuomo's greatest political strength. Cuomo comes from the social territory that appears in *The Bonfire of the Vanities*, but only in the cameo roles: the walk-on workaday figures, not the vice-ridden under- and overclasses. It is a parochial—but electorally significant—truth that Cuomo *is* the angry middle-class homeowner to whom the Republicans have pitched their appeal since the days of Richard Nixon.

In 1988, casting about for a political persona, George Bush rented Peggy Noonan's evocation of the postwar middle-class myth for his acceptance speech, making him seem to be one of "us." But Bush's rhetorical world is a place where Cuomo has really lived. Massapequa, Long Island, where Noonan grew up, is only a few miles from Queens. Her poetry about the odyssey of the middle class describes Cuomo's prosaic experience, not that of the patrician who paid the handsome fee for her phrasemaking.

Much of Cuomo's politics is adduced from his autobiography. But his real journey is not the one he celebrates. His odyssey was not from the Old Country to America, but from the city to the outer borough. He did not grow up tending vines in the Mezzogiorno; instead, as a young man he stepped across the baseline of the field of dreams wearing the jersey of a Pittsburgh Pirates farm team. "I was," Cuomo has said, "in heaven." In baseball terms, the cultural divide between Cuomo and Bush is between the Georgia-leaguer and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Yale captain. To escape the story the Republicans wish to tell about him, he must, to begin with, get his rhetoric out of steerage. In spite of his tireless soul-searching, Cuomo is guilty of filiopiety to the neglect of his own epic. To the increasingly straitened middle class, it is an epic that could have considerable political and personal appeal.

On race, the deepest wound in American life, Cuomo has been adroit. His entrance into the public arena came as the successful mediator among warring racial and ethnic groups whose conflict over a Forest Hills housing project had seemed insoluble. In patiently explaining his liberal views on race to middle- and working-class whites, he has never antagonized them; he's accepted as a conciliator, since he too is from the neighborhood. Meanwhile, he has become a favorite of black voters, who preferred him by a 70 to 30 percent margin over Ed Koch in the 1982 gubernatorial primary. In the Tawana Brawley case, when a black teenager's false claim to have been raped by white racists aroused hysteria, Cuomo assigned to the case the state attorney general, Robert Abrams, who helped expose the fraud. In the racial attack on blacks in Howard Beach, Cuomo, over the protest of demagogic black leaders who wanted to prove the unfairness of the justice system, forced the naming of his friend Joe Hynes as the special prosecutor, who went on to win the convictions. In the Bensonhurst murder of a black youngster, Cuomo said, "Yusef Hawkins was my child," and attended the funeral.

But now the economic crisis has mutated new conflicts. The Black and Hispanic Caucus of the state legislature has insisted on casting the state's fiscal crunch as a black-white issue. One black representative denounced Cuomo as "racist" because of the budget cuts. The Caucus led a march on Albany, and black students protesting a tuition hike shattered the glass doors to his office. Cuomo has sought ways to avoid getting the state involved in the financial restructuring of New York City, in part to avoid the appearance of racial conflict with the black mayor, David Dinkins. So far, though, Cuomo, alone among New York's major Democrats, has managed to keep himself out of the swamp of pathological racial politics. Avoiding either demagogy or pandering, he has, in this fetid miasma, demonstrated political mastery.

So is he running or isn't he? This is always the wrong question. The problem for Cuomo is not his arguments with everybody from God to Bush, but his endless arguments with himself. The only institution in American politics more raucous and divided than the Democratic Party is Mario Cuomo's mind; this is why the roots of his indecision cannot ultimately be located in any poll or scenario. He is at once confident and insecure, angry and compassionate, a Vincentian-trained ratiocinator who may seem the captive of his logical method and an agitator able to move crowds on deep emotional levels. His speech is always limpid, but he remains enigmatic, even to himself.

"You're asking about me? Is that the question? I don't know that anybody knows himself well. Do I want to prove that I can achieve great things? No. I would have had to have run for president last time if that were the motivation. I did very well in the polls. A lot of smart people called me up and said, Mario, you can do this thing. My judgment is probably not as good as theirs as to the politics. They knew more about my chances than I did."

Cuomo's self-deprecation is a form of evasion. His beliefs, motives, and fortune are knotted together; they must all be securely fastened to pull him along. Cuomo believes in belief itself as much as he believes in individual articles of faith. As he portrays it, contradictions between his words and his record do not prove that he lacks conviction or has betrayed his ideas, but that he lives as a fallible man in a profane world—where the state senate and the national administration are in the hands of Republicans.

Because of his belief in belief, he judges Reagan and Bush on different scales. "Reagan," says Cuomo, "believed in his heart that you oughtn't to give money for social programs; they don't work. He thought he was doing God's work by cutting off the poor." Cuomo admires Reagan for his sincere belief, but deplores the doctrine. He praises Bush for his professed belief, but faults him for hypocrisy: "What he has done . . . is to talk the game of compassion and commitment to all these problems nationally, but then not put up the resources. . . . He co-opts you until you get to the point where he has to prove that he meant what he said. If he proves it, then he's a Democrat and we may as well support him; or he doesn't prove it, and we run against him on that basis. If you're able to separate yourself from the Persian Gulf, which won't be difficult, that's what you're left with. You will be able to make the point with Bush that he admitted we were right about the need for national government, but that he didn't do it."

But Cuomo cannot do what he says must be done because he is immobilized by his budget. He has a ready explanation for his morass: it's the result of two Republican presidents' distortion of the proper roles of the federal and state governments. Cuomo blames New York's budget deficit on a "twin redistribution": responsibility for dealing with social problems downward, from the national government to the states; and wealth upward, from the middle class to the rich. The states now must raise revenues to cope with the federal dumping of programs. They do so through forms of taxation that tend to be regressive. At the federal level, meanwhile, the tax cuts have benefited mostly the wealthy and starved the government of resources. The problems mount as the means to deal with them wane; the squeeze promotes social anger and apathy.

For Cuomo, what is at stake is a first principle. "I believe deeply in the national government. This is what Hamilton warned against in the Federalist Papers. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

simple point he makes is that in raising revenues, which you are going to need to expand, you need a national government that raises the wealth. If you leave it to the states, they will be pitted against one another and their strengths and usefulness will deteriorate. I'm a very strong believer that we need a strong national government. And President Bush has proven it. He couldn't have won the war without it. Oh, that's only for fighting wars? The federal government has abandoned to a great extent its obligation on national concerns. They"—Cuomo's "they" again—"have gotten away with it politically."

For his own part, Cuomo is constantly examining and re-examining his motives. He might like us to imagine him donning a monk's coarse robe, using a cold stone for a chair, and writing with a quill in his diary into the dark early morning hours. He demands our forbearance for the pose of exquisite indecision. "Jewish guilt runs a very distant second to old-fashioned Catholic guilt," he says. "I was raised with the specter of sin, damnation, and selfishness as the ultimate sin. The whole ideal theologically was to deny yourself. Ambition was a sin. There is in all of us in that generation an unwillingness to accept the importance of self. I should run to my mother and say, I'm running for president? Every time I think of that as a possible motive I run in the other direction."

Temporal success, he suggests, is never for him the measure of success. "You can do things that are absolutely right and even noble and be condemned," he says. "You can do things absolutely ignoble, absolutely wrong, and be cheered. So there is no relationship between the nation saying you should be our leader and your own good performance.... That is my belief. It could be naive." Or it could be false modesty, a modesty that is part of the impressive performance of appearing to commune with higher spirits.

Cuomo thinks about his ambition by reflecting on the lives of secular saints. These icons are for him masks and ideals—projections of his own ambiguities and tensions. One of his saints is Thomas More, the martyr. Another is Lincoln. "I love Lincoln," says Cuomo. "He was fallible, inconstant, sometimes self-indulgent, wrong, afraid, confused, beset by all the temporalities, just like Cuomo and everyone I know. He wasn't a superman, not a myth, but a real person." (Last year Cuomo delivered a lengthy speech on Lincoln's legacy at Gettysburg and co-edited with Judge Harold Holzer a volume of his writings and speeches, *Lincoln on Democracy*.) "Ambition?" Cuomo asks rhetorically. "Lincoln wanted to achieve in his own life, but it's hard for me to believe that it was just egocentric."

Cuomo's moral pride—his moral vanity, really—makes him cloak his own ambition in a holy raiment. Only if defeat seems all but certain can the purity of a candidate's motives be placed beyond question. By seeking an office others believe cannot be won—the presidency in 1992—he would keep his motives unassailable, especially in failure. Were he then to succeed, of course, he would appear greater than all.

Cuomo is unchastened by his pre-war stab at expertise in foreign affairs, when he was roundly criticized for his proposal that the United States negotiate with Saddam Hussein rather than go to war, and wound up lamely explaining that he was only speaking in the hypothetical. Now, as the fog of euphoria lifts, revealing the plight of the Kurds and Saddam still in power, Cuomo believes the foreign policy question can be finessed. "Bush was in difficulty with the Gulf situation in the beginning because it was confused," Cuomo says. "He said it wasn't oil or jobs. He got it down to 'Saddam is Hitler,' the best rationale. That worked very well. Now he and we as a nation are being challenged by that rationale. If Saddam is Hitler, the devil, then you confuse me.... What is your rationale, Mr. President? *You're confusing us.*"

Of course, a confused administration does not make for a lucid opposition. Why don't the Democrats speak up? Because, says Cuomo, they're "frightened and reluctant—and they deny themselves a lot of positions. I think we're afraid to be Democrats. Maybe we're mesmerized by the polls. But if you're going to deny yourself, you can't distinguish yourself sufficiently from the Republicans." Lacking belief in what ought to be their principles, the Democrats shun the risks that might lift them from their quandary.

Yet Cuomo himself has yet to prove that he is capable of taking the ultimate risk—that of a national candidacy. As a governor, he bears the burden of a paralyzed government, making it impossible to offer the example of its efficacy. He would have to overcome the skepticism of government that has infected much of the middle class, which has moved itself to the suburbs, where it purchases a discrete form of government—and social insulation—for itself. Cuomo's middle-class identity could help him leap the enormous gap between their disbelief and his promise. But this will demand more than another eloquent statement of his credo. Fortune is more than the odds or the opportunity, and the one who seizes it is more than an opportunist. In the end, the politician who does not attend to power cannot defend his larger purposes. Virtue without power is lifeless.

Underneath the glass covering his desk, Cuomo keeps a poem by Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. The governor reads it aloud to me, as if declaiming to a filled hall:

> Build thee more stately mansions, oh my soul.
> As the swift seasons roll,
> Leave thy low-vaulted past.

Next to his desk he opens a door. One steps into the magnificently restored Executive Chamber of marble and mahogany. Brilliant light streams through the stained-glass windows circling the vast high-ceilinged room. Perhaps this ceiling is tall enough for Cuomo's ambitions after all. If it is, then his political career is near its end. ●

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Contradictions

Luc Besson has nerve. In **La Femme Nikita** (Samuel Goldwyn), he dares to take on the Godard challenge. Very near the outset, Nikita wantonly kills a policeman, just as Michel does in Godard's *Breathless.* Besson is even a bit braver than Godard. Michel had a few minutes before the murder to establish himself as a charming amoral adventurer. Nikita is just a violent druggie out for thrills with some other violent druggies. But the challenge in both cases is the same: how to get audience sympathy for a callous cop-killer who is the center of the film that follows.

Godard's success grew out of his subtle dramatization of postwar anomie. Besson's job is tougher because what starts as mindless hedonism leads only to a relatively conventional thriller—no trace of thematic seriousness whatsoever. Yet he succeeds, too: because of the quality of that thriller (which he wrote), the various prices that Nikita pays en route, and the quality of Besson's directing.

Nikita, of whose background we learn nothing, is the one woman in a gang of spaced-out types who break into a Paris drugstore for a fix, are surprised by cops, and shoot it out with them. She, zonked under a counter, manages to pick up a pistol and kill a cop. She is sentenced to life. She is given an injection that she thinks, in her still-fuzzy state, is lethal, but that instead only knocks her out. She awakes in a large, secret, government establishment. There she is told by an agent-instructor that she will be spared prison if she will let herself be trained—arduously—to become an operative for a James Bond version of a French CIA. (For operative, read assassin.) Detoxed, she is quite bright, understands that they don't give a hoot if she is killed on the job, takes it on after the predictable doubts and failures, and after three years of training, is given her first test assignment: a killing in a posh restaurant.

She brings it off, despite surprises. She gets more assignments, all killings. At last she is deemed sufficiently reliable to be sent out into the world, to rent an apartment and await instructions. While she is waiting, she meets a young man. After they have entwined, instructions come. The young man is involved. So is the agent-instructor. The script has the requisite twists, and it finds a bittersweet ending.

La Femme Nikita, its plot full of snares, is itself a snare for the audience. Viewed coldly, it's just an adequately crafted spy-suspense-murder yarn—with the added zinger that the protagonist moves, at figurative gunpoint, from one side of the law to the other. But the making of the film is so slick, the acting so exceptional, that we find ourselves trapped—caring about what happens to the three principals.

Besson is, in a good sense, an exploitative director. He knows how to get the most out of everything. With his cinematographer, Thiery Arbogast, he pitches each sequence in a plaque of light that makes it look like a smart spread for *Vanity Fair.* And he is pretty deft with that bugaboo of every director, the time lapse.

He has cast his film triumphantly. Foremost, of course, is Nikita. Anne Parillaud, previously unknown to me, is slim, wiry yet feminine, sexy without beauty, then sexy with beauty (after the agency fixes her up), the kind of actress who seems able to change chromosomes as needed. In this one role, she ranges easily from lower-depths degradation to light comedy-romance.

Jeanne Moreau turns up in the minor role of a government employee, a staff cosmetician-costumier. To put it bluntly, Moreau looks every one of her 63 years, but this adds to her wryness as she instructs Nikita in the uses and risks of femininity in her job. Jean-Hugues Anglade has easy spontaneous appeal as the boyfriend, and Tcheky Karyo is fittingly taciturn as Nikita's instructor, who is himself smitten by her.

Besides getting a grip on us because of its execution (no pun), *La Femme Nikita* also illustrates an ancient truth about violence in films. Objectionable violence is violence that we find objectionable: no more profound judgment will truthfully serve. The killings in *Die Hard 2* are boring and disgusting because the picture exists only for the killings. In *La Femme Nikita* the plot movement is so incisive and Parillaud so interesting a wanderer between stages of moral consciousness that the violence becomes one of the film's essentials.

A different sort of contradiction. Peter Greenaway's **Drowning by Numbers** (Prestige) is so suffocatingly intent on High

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Class Action. *Gene Hackman all the way. And Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio almost all the way. They are lawyers, father and daughter, in a Hollywood entertainment that really sizzles. (Reviewed 4/15/91)* **The Comfort of Strangers.** *Harold Pinter's screenplay, from an Ian McEwan novel, is nearly perfect. Christopher Walken is perfect, and the three other principals are not far behind, in this sexually mysterious encounter of two couples in Venice. Paul Schrader directs exquisitely. (4/29/91)* **The Doors.** *Oliver Stone's overlong, overdone but throbbing tribute to the '60s rock group. Val Kilmer is saturninely strong as Jim Morrison. (4/1/91)* **Paris Is Burning.** *A fascinating and eventually quite moving documentary, by Jennie Livingston, about gay black fashion shows. (4/22/91)* —**SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Art that we wonder why some accomplished actors consented to appear in it. What persuaded Joan Plowright and Juliet Stevenson and Bernard Hill to accept their roles? This self-adulating pussycat picture gives them and other actors plenty to do, but none of it is even vaguely related to character or story or credible feeling. The actors are all mobile mannequins, posing in different ways for Greenaway's exhibitionism.

Insofar as synopsis is possible, or warranted, the film is about three women with the same name—grandmother, mother, and daughter—all of whom drown their husbands. The only other consistency in the piece is that, by different means, all the numerals from 1 to 100 are visible before it finishes. So if you have been longing for a film in which you could see the numbers 1 to 100, your prayer has been answered.

Greenaway, last represented by *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife & Her Lover*, is a graphic artist who has made numerous films. Of the ones I've seen, only one married his painterly eye with cinema, *The Draughtsman's Contract*. Greenaway notes dishearteningly—he supplied the press with voluminous notes—that *Drowning by Numbers* was written while *The Draughtsman's Contract* was being edited. So he learned nothing from making his best film. Apparently it was a lucky accident.

Greenaway also tells us that *Drowning by Numbers* "is an opportunity to play games in an idyllic English landscape." If so, he hasn't used the opportunity to make the games amusing to many besides himself. He has an impressive eye for composition, and he crowds frames with detail, like a Dutch genre painter gone a bit nutty. But very little amuses. The film seems such a private spoof, for himself and some friends, that we feel like intruders for presuming to watch. (And why *are* those actors in it?) ●

Hitler's blitzkrieg against modern art.

The Fall of the House of Art

BY ROBERT DARNTON

It is an odd sensation to step from the blazing sunshine of Los Angeles into the dark world of Nazism evoked by " 'Degenerate Art': The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany," an exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The exhibition contains 175 of the 650 paintings, sculptures, and graphics that the Nazis displayed in Munich in 1937 as examples of the "degeneracy" that they meant to expunge from German culture.

Those works represented all the major strains of modern art in Germany—Expressionism, Dada, the Bauhaus, the New Objectivity—and all the most important artists—Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger, Max Beckmann, George Grosz, Otto Dix, Franz Marc, Emil Nolde, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff. Having offended the Nazi eye, the art was exposed to public derision, banished to cellars, sold off to foreigners, and burned. What survived bears witness to the nastiest chapter in the history of art: aesthetic totalitarianism.

But it seems strangely out of place in Los Angeles. Hung correctly, instead of crammed together on graffiti-smeared walls as they were in Munich, the pictures look incapable of giving offense. The Californians stroll past them casually in boxer shorts, miniskirts, and T-shirts that proclaim messages like "Celebrate Queerness." The graffiti from 1937—"Take Dada seriously! It's worth it" (George Grosz), "The artist as an artist must be an anarchist" (Kurt Eisner)—do not strike any raw nerves here, perhaps because Dada itself was long ago absorbed into the commercial culture of the West. A visitor may pick up an occasional exclamation: "Tubular!" "Fresh!" But he will not find indignation.

"Degenerate Art": The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany
(Los Angeles County Museum of Art, February 17 to May 12, 1991; The Art Institute of Chicago, June 22 to September 8, 1991; catalog edited by Stephanie Barron, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 424 pp., $75, $40 paper)

How can we comprehend the passions provoked by those pictures fifty-four years ago? The designers of the exhibition have done a superb job of creating a context for the art. You can watch videos of Hitler haranguing crowds, of Joseph Goebbels burning books. You can see excerpts from banned Expressionist films and listen to tapes of "degenerate" twelve-tone music along with the "Horst Wessel Song." You can even study an extraordinary film of the public at the original exhibition, which was made by an American journalist named Julien Bryan. It shows men in three-piece suits and women in hats, standing in front of the very pictures that are hanging at that very moment all around you. They say nothing, show nothing on their faces, slide off the screen. If you hold with those who argue that art consists of visual experience, something that exists in the eye of the beholder, you will be drawn up short before your inability to penetrate the glance of those Germans from 1937. The Los Angeles show contains a mystery, then, an exhibition within an exhibition. Instead of making the past accessible, it shows how far it lies beyond our range of vision.

No doubt the organizers of the exhibition had a different end in view. In a superb catalog, which provides the fullest information ever compiled about the Munich show, they emphasize "an uncomfortable parallel" between 1937 and the present. We are meant to think of Robert Mapplethorpe, Jesse Helms, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the beleaguered state of many American art museums. But the parallel does not work, for it is one thing to refuse to allocate public funds for the support of the arts, another to attempt to wipe modern art off the face of the earth.

Consider the Nazi campaign against modernism that led to the exhibition of 1937. In *Mein Kampf*, which appeared in 1925, Hitler railed against "the sickly excrescences of lunatics or of degenerate people which since the turn of the century we have learned to know under the collective conception of cubism or dadaism." He probably picked those ideas out of the overcharged atmosphere of Vienna in 1909-13, when he lived down and out as a rejected art student and a painter of postcards. They had already appeared in popular books like Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (1892); and they were first put into practice in 1930, when the Nazis took over the provincial government of Thuringia and ran the original Bauhaus out of Weimar, while purging Weimar's Schlossmuseum of its modern art, including some beautiful

ROBERT DARNTON is professor of history at Princeton University. His *Berlin Journal, 1989-1990* will be published in June by W. W. Norton.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

paintings by Feininger and Klee.

After gaining control of the entire country in 1933, the Nazis subordinated all cultural activity to the "Führer principle"—that is, to centralized state control through the Reich Chamber for Culture under Goebbels, who cleared all important decisions concerning the fine arts with Hitler. Art criticism was forbidden by a decree of November 11, 1936. Museum directors and curators who sympathized with modernism of any variety were systematically fired. Many of them, notably Ludwig Justi, the director of the Nationalgalerie in Berlin, had built up great collections of modern art. The Nazis tore the collections down, consigning everything "degenerate" to storerooms and often exhibiting it in "horror chambers" designed to indoctrinate the public about the danger of "Jewish-Bolshevism" in art.

In 1937 Goebbels gathered all these activities into what was meant to be the final solution to the problem of modernism in Germany. He named a commission of six fanatics, led by Adolf Ziegler, president of the Reich Chamber of the Visual Arts, to run a dragnet through all the museums of Germany in order to put together a supreme "horror chamber" show, which became the "Degenerate Art" exhibition. Ziegler's men did not worry about legal niceties. Empowered by the Führer principle, they raced through thirty-two museums in twenty-eight cities and helped themselves to nearly 700 paintings, sculptures, and graphics. They stuffed these works, the flower of German modernism, into nine rooms of the Archaeological Institute in Munich. In order to make sure that visitors got the right impression, they covered the walls with excerpts from speeches by Hitler and Goebbels, labels announcing how much of the taxpayers' money (in the inflated currency of the 1920s) had been wasted on such atrocities, and mocking graffiti: "Revelation of the Jewish racial soul," "An insult to German womanhood," "The ideal—cretin and whore," "The Jewish longing for the wilderness reveals itself—in Germany the Negro becomes the racial ideal of a degenerate art."

The exhibition opened on July 19, 1937. On the previous day, with tremendous pomp and circumstance, Hitler had inaugurated the "Great German Art Exhibition," the first of the annual shows of contemporary work that had the Nazis' blessing, in the House of German Art only a few hundred yards away across the Galeriestrasse. The "degenerate" art greatly outdrew the orthodox, probably because of its aura of sensationalism but perhaps, too, because some people wanted to say goodbye to it.

According to some reports, the Nazis hired actors to stir up the indignation of the public. Peter Guenther, who visited the exhibition as a 17-year-old, recalls his impressions in an essay printed in the catalog to the Los Angeles show:

> The strong colors of the paintings, the interfering texts, the large wall panels with quotations from speeches by Hitler and Joseph Goebbels all created a chaotic impression. I felt an overwhelming sense of claustrophobia. The large number of people pushing and ridiculing and proclaiming their dislike for the works of art created the impression of a staged performance intended to provoke an atmosphere of aggressiveness and anger. Over and over again, people read aloud the purchase prices and laughed, shook their heads, or demanded "their" money back.

But he also notes "a few who talked, rather quietly, and it appeared that some of them had seen these works before or even liked them. . . . I remember hearing a whispered 'aren't they lovely?' from a woman standing in front of some graphic works on the lower floor; she then walked away quickly."

ADOLF HITLER AT THE EXHIBITION

The public arrived in such numbers that the show was extended for two months, until the end of November. In somewhat modified form, it then traveled through a dozen other German and Austrian cities. By April 1941, when it was finally retired, it had been seen by about 3 million people—more, it seems, than have seen any other art exhibition before or since.

Meanwhile Ziegler's commission continued to plunder museums. They eventually confiscated 20,000 works by 1,400 artists, virtually all the modern art on public display in Germany. Goebbels had 125 of the most valuable works—including van Gogh's *Self-Portrait* (now in the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard), Gauguin's *From Tahiti* (now in Liège), and Picasso's *Two Harlequins* (purchased for a Japanese client at Christie's in 1988 for $38,500,000)—auctioned for foreign currency by the Galerie Fischer in Lucerne in 1939. The auction raised a total of $115,000 for Hitler's war machine.

Most of the other works were crammed into storerooms at 24 Köpenickerstrasse in Berlin. A few Nazi collectors helped themselves to some of the choicest items, such as Franz Marc's *The Tower of Blue Horses*, one of the most famous paintings from the "Degenerate" exhibition, which was appropriated by Göring and has disappeared. According to Paul Ortwin Rave, a curator at the Nationalgalerie in Berlin during the 1930s, the Nazis destroyed 5,000 works in a gigantic bonfire in front of the central fire department in Berlin on March 20, 1939. Ortwin's account has been disputed, but a great deal of the confiscated art has certainly been annihilated. It is remarkable that the organizers of the Los Angeles exhibition were able to bring together so much of it—nearly a third of the works exhibited in the "Degenerate" show of 1937.

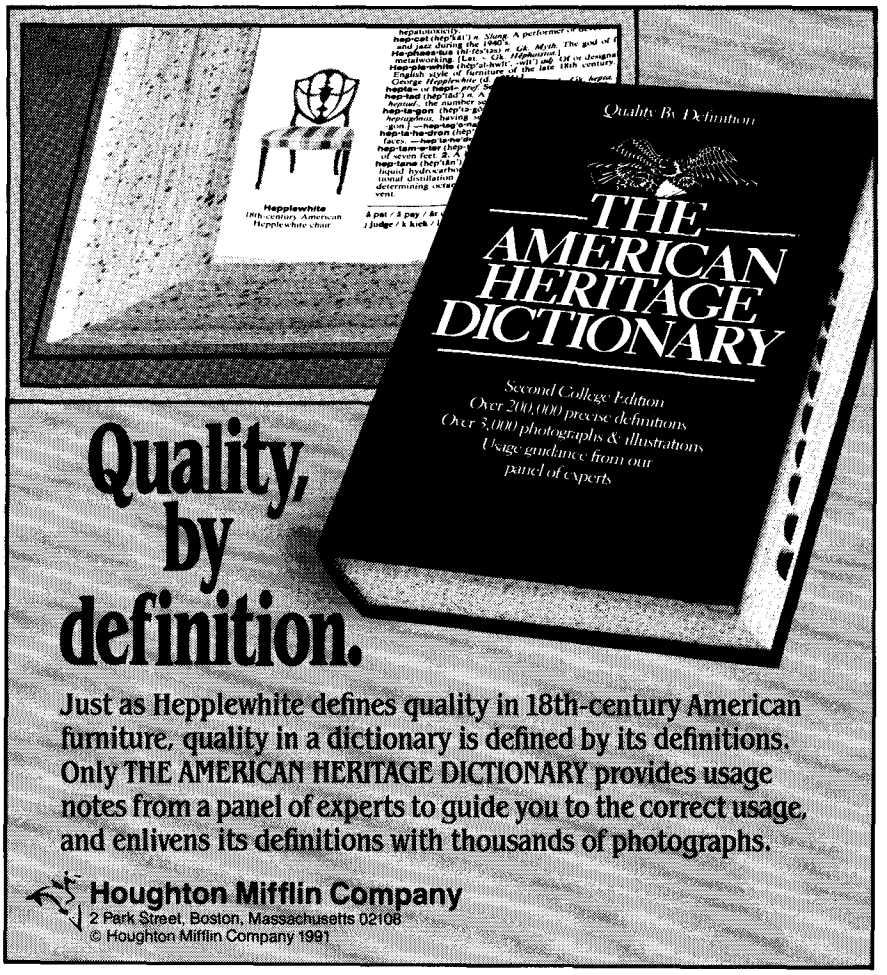
Most of the artists represented by the show fled from the Third Reich in a massive diaspora, which spread the German varieties of modernism throughout the Western world. Those who remained

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

generally stopped working or withdrew into safe genres. Forbidden to continue painting, Emil Nolde secretly did miniature watercolors, fearing that oils could be detected by their smell. Otto Dix abandoned all social and political themes and later remarked, "I painted landscapes. That was tantamount to emigration." Broken by persecution and illness, Ernst Barlach and Alexej von Jawlensky died in despair in 1938 and 1941. Ernst Ludwig Kirchner committed suicide in 1938. Erich Heckel, Karl Hofer, Max Pechstein, and Karl Schmidt-Rottluff survived the war but lost much of their work when their studios were destroyed in bombings.

No matter how one measures it, Nazism was an unmitigated disaster for German art. By 1939 it looked as though the Nazis had eradicated modernism from the culture of their country. Why? The question seems especially puzzling after a visit to the Los Angeles exhibition. Why did the Nazis devote so much time and energy to the destruction of works like these, which look so innocuous today? Modern art hardly threatened their hold on power. Why did they take it so seriously? If, as it seems, they were mostly undereducated philistines, why did they lavish such attention on aesthetic issues? Albert Speer was astonished at the artistic obsessions of the party bosses: "It seemed that headquarters took architecture, or rather festival decor, with extraordinary seriousness." He was amazed that every two or three weeks in 1933 Hitler would take a train from Berlin to Munich and spend hours with Paul Ludwig Troost, his favorite architect, poring over the most minute details of the House of German Art, the first public building constructed by the Nazis.

At the dedication of the House of German Art in 1937, Hitler hailed its opening as "a turning point in the evolution of all our German cultural activities." He helped select the works of the contemporary German (i.e., Aryan) artists that were shown at the opening exhibition. Every year until 1942 he returned to inaugurate the exhibitions and to preside over the accompanying parades. The parade of 1937 celebrated "Two Thousand Years of German Culture." It streamed past the Führer in a line of 3,212 marchers accompanied by floats—a huge plaster model of Troost's museum followed by a gigantic head of Athena—and dressed in costumes that traced a trajectory from the Vikings to the SS. Seen on a video in the first section of the Los Angeles exhibition, it looks like an absurd version of the Rose Bowl Pageant. But Hitler's parades were deadly serious—a matter of art, not football.


Hepplewhite
Quality By Definition
THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY
Second College Edition
Over 200,000 precise definitions
Over 3,000 photographs & illustrations
Usage guidance from our panel of experts
Quality, by definition.
Just as Hepplewhite defines quality in 18th-century American furniture, quality in a dictionary is defined by its definitions. Only THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY provides usage notes from a panel of experts to guide you to the correct usage, and enlivens its definitions with thousands of photographs.
Houghton Mifflin Company
2 Park Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108
© Houghton Mifflin Company 1991

ON READING THE CONSTITUTION

Laurence H. Tribe and Michael C. Dorf

"An energetic and often highly illuminating discussion of how constitutional interpretation inevitably involves substantive choices but is not simply a matter of making things up...*On Reading the Constitution* reminds us of the extent to which our understanding of constitutional interpretation remains in a primitive state...Tribe and Dorf's book counts as an unusually articulate contribution to the large number of recent works attempting to justify, to preserve, and to extend the work of the Warren Court."

—Cass Sunstein, *New Republic*

Available at bookstores $18.95 cloth

Harvard University Press

79 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138 (617) 495-2480

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Of course, much of this seriousness can be attributed to Hitler himself, the frustrated artist and would-be architect of a Thousand Year Reich. He seems to have absorbed the neo-Romantic or pop-Nietzschean notion of the artist as a genius-seer, who accedes to power by unleashing the irrational from deep within nature and the folk. Hitler's aesthetics were shared by a large public, thanks to popular works such as Julius Langbehn's *Dürer as Führer*, Paul Schultze-Naumburg's *Art and Race*, and Wolfgang Willrich's *Cleansing of the Temple of Art*. In 1913, long before Hitler had entered politics, the Prussian House of Representatives passed a resolution condemning the "degeneration" of art.

The hostility to modern art belonged to a strain of populism that had spread everywhere in the West, and especially in Weimar Germany, where modernism flourished. German museums had taken the lead in collecting works by the modern masters of nineteenth-century France—the Nationalgalerie in Berlin was the first museum anywhere to buy a painting by Cézanne—and they especially supported the avant-garde from contemporary Germany. By 1930 many of those German artists formed something like an establishment. They had benefitted from one-man shows, retrospectives, professorships, and seats in the Prussian Academy of Arts. Their movements already occupied a place in art history, marked off by fairly distant dates: 1905, the founding of The Bridge Expressionists in Dresden; 1911, the founding of The Blue Rider Expressionists in Munich; 1916, the first Dada proclamation in Zurich; 1919, the founding of the Bauhaus in Weimar; 1925, the New Objectivity exhibition in Mannheim.

The Nazis had very visible targets. They also had a public. Their anti-modernism appealed to those who felt threatened by modern art, who were made to feel stupid by it, who expressed their inability to understand it by hostility—not merely to modernism but to the Weimar regime as a whole. Deviation from a supposedly classical ideal of beauty could be made to look like moral, political, even racial degeneration. The Weimar Republic could be attacked at its soft aesthetic underbelly, and the attackers could find legitimacy by acting in the name of timeless truth and beauty—the ideal embodied by the House of German Art, which was Troost's version of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's version of a Greek temple. In contrast to this comforting classicism, much of modern art, especially Dada and the New Objectivity, was intended to provoke. The Nazis saw it as aesthetic aggression, and they responded with aggression of their own kind: physical annihilation.

Everything seems to fit: populism, Weimar-bashing, the need for legitimation, the frustrations of mediocre and marginalized intellectuals in the face of an established art elite. Yet the anti-modernism of the Nazis defies comprehension, partly because of its sheer virulence. Consider Hitler's remarks at the opening of the exhibition in the House of German Art in 1937. In denouncing the "Art-Bolshevism" of the sort in the exhibition of "degeneracy" across the Galeriestrasse, he fulminated against art depicting "misshapen cripples and cretins, women who can arouse only revulsion, men closer to beasts than to human beings" and went on to recommend not merely repression but euthanasia:

> Let no one try to say that such artists really see things this way. I have noticed among the works submitted many that compel the supposition that some peoples' eyes fail to show them things as they really are: that is, that there really exist men who see our people of the present day only as absolute cretins, and who, as a matter of principle, perceive—or, as no doubt they would put it, "experience"—meadows as blue, skies as green, clouds as sulfur yellow, and so forth. I have no intention of entering into any argument as to whether these individuals really see and feel that way or not, but on behalf of the German people I would like to ban any such pitiful unfortunates—evidently the victims of defective eyesight—from attempting to bluff the public into accepting the products of their distorted vision as real, or even as "art."
>
> No, there are only two possible alternatives. Either these so-called artists really see things this way and therefore believe in what they represent, in which case we would simply have to investigate whether their visual defects spring from a mechanical or a congenital cause. If the former, this would be a matter for deep regret on behalf of these unfortunates themselves; if the latter, then it would be a matter for the Reich Ministry of the Interior, which would make it its business at least to forestall any further hereditary transmission of such appalling visual defects. Or else even they do not believe in the reality of such impressions but seek to foist their humbug on the people for other reasons; then such behavior falls within the scope of criminal law.

Here spoke the Hitler of the gas chambers and the ovens of Auschwitz, yet he was discussing modern art. How did things from one realm of experience, the aesthetic, get mixed up, in the Nazi mind, with those in another, the political, and then with those in still another, the biological? Did the Nazis order reality by collapsing things that we would keep apart and by separating things that we would bring together? Evidently they looked at paintings for representation of "things as they really are," reading them literally instead of responding to them as an autonomous mode of visual experience. To them, a distorted image on a canvas apparently belonged to the same order of being as a Mongoloid patient in a hospital. In *Art and Race* (1928) Schultze-Naumburg published photographs of deformed faces next to reproductions of portraits by Modigliani and Schmidt-Rottluff, as if the art were literally the product of a warped imagination.

Healthy, Aryan imaginations could be presumed to produce beautiful pictures. Their art would correspond in a positive way to "things as they really are"—that is, to truth and beauty as it had been formulated by the Greeks and transmitted to the present through the blood and soil of Germany. But however simple their notions of aesthetics, the Nazis could not get round the problematic side of mimesis. For artists do not merely record reality. They also organize it. And in attempting to get reality right, they confront a dangerous array of contradictions and ambiguities.

The Nazis tried to dispel this danger by drawing a line between true and false art—a clear, palpable line, which ran right down the Galeriestrasse in central Munich. On one side of it, the Great German Art Exhibition in the House of German Art embodied absolute orthodoxy; on the other, the exhibition of "degenerate" works exposed everything taboo. Seldom, if ever, in the history of art has such a barrier been erected. The Nazis evidently felt a need to make everything absolutely clear. As Goebbels put it in a speech about the dual exhibitions delivered a year later, on July 9, 1938: "It was necessary to create clarity in a sphere where circumstances could have continued to produce a direct slap in the face of the national-socialistic conception of folk, state, and culture."

But the more the Nazis clarified, the more they exposed themselves to ambiguities. Their difficulties can be appreciated by comparing the internal organization of the two exhibitions. In accordance with the principle that art should correspond to the realities recorded by the healthy (that is, the Aryan) eye, the orthodox exhibition excluded all works by artists of non-Germanic stock and displayed the suitably Nordic works by subject matter. Troost's Greek temple (it had an air raid shelter in its basement) was laid out like a department store: landscapes in one section, family scenes in another, genre pictures, animal pictures, nudes, all in their own compartments and all for sale. Later traveling

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

versions of the official exhibitions also were organized according to subject: "The Horse in Art," "Nordic Land," "Pictures of the Family," and so forth.

From today's perspective, the paintings and statues look ludicrously like kitsch; but in 1937 they represented mainstream academic art from the nineteenth century, the kind that had been rendered anachronistic by modernism, except that much of it had ideological undertones. The muscle-bound nudes sculpted by Josef Thorak (*Comradeship*) and Arno Breker (*Readiness*) expressed the Nazi ideal of conquering manliness. And the female nudes by Adolf Ziegler—Hitler's favorite painter, known in the art world as "pubic-hair Ziegler"—seemed to offer themselves up for conquest. (Ziegler's pseudo-classical *The Four Elements* received pride of place in the exhibition and was purchased by Hitler to adorn the pseudo-classical New Chancellery designed by Speer.)

The works in the "degenerate" exhibition were grouped into the following categories, according to the exhibition guide prepared for the traveling version of the show (the phrases are quoted from different sections of the guide; the italics appear in the original):

1. *Barbarism of representation* from the point of view of technique
2. *Religious themes*
3. The *political basis of degenerate art*
4. Marxist draft-dodging propaganda
5. The moral aspect of degeneracy in art
6. Marxist and Bolshevik ideology whose objective is the systematic *eradication of the last vestige of racial consciousness*
7. A highly specific *intellectual ideal*, namely, the *idiot*, the *cretin*, and the *cripple*
8. Jewish trash
9. A cross section of all the abortions produced by all the "isms"

According to the guide, these nine rubrics represented "a clear organizational principle." To the modern reader, they seem as incoherent, mutually incompatible, and generally unthinkable as the rubrics of the famous Chinese encyclopedia imagined by Borges and expounded by Foucault.

How, then, can one think one's way into the aesthetic order of Nazism? The Los Angeles exhibition does not provide an answer to that question, although it groups the works in the same way as the exhibition of 1937. In room three of the original show, the Nazis hung an abstract Kandinsky (*Two Kinds of Red*), a brutally political Dix (*War Cripples*), a poetic Klee (*Around the Fish*), a Dada lithograph by Raoul Hausmann, George Grosz, and John Heartfield, a gentle sculpture by Ernst Barlach (*Christ and John*), an incandescent Nolde (*Nudes and Eunuch*), and an icily geometric Fei-

"Freedom is as little lost in a day as won in a day."—Edmund Burke

The Fourth Estate and the Constitution
Freedom of the Press in America
LUCAS A. POWE, JR.
"Powe retrieves the colorful story of press freedom from judicial doctrine, academic theory, and journalistic self-righteousness and restores its essential political context. His characteristically outspoken account is in the best tradition of legal realism"
—Hans A. Linde, co-author of Legislative and Administrative Processes
$29.95 cloth, 369 pages

Transforming Free Speech
The Ambiguous Legacy of Civil Libertarianism
MARK A. GRABER
The civil libertarian legacy has been narrowly understood: in what sense are free-speech rights traditional? Graber chronicles the "invention" of a tradition of free speech that ignored how social inequalities affect the exercise of free expression—dating to the political-legal machinations of the Progressive Era.
$39.95 cloth, 347 pages

At bookstores or order toll-free 1-800-822-6657. Visa & MasterCard only.
University of California Press
Berkeley Los Angeles New York Oxford

"Timely and important"
—Zbigniew Brzezinski

Moscow, Germany, and the West from Khrushchev to Gorbachev

By **MICHAEL J. SODARO.**
Studies of the Harriman Institute.
In this authoritative account of Soviet-German relations during the decades leading up to the unification of Germany, Michael J. Sodaro provides a comparative analysis of Soviet and East German policy toward West Germany of unparalleled scope and originality. $49.95 cloth, $15.95 paper

CORNELL
University Press
124 Roberts Place, Ithaca, NY 14850

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ninger (*Hopfgarten*). What did such works have in common? How could they occupy the same space?

Apparently the Nazis searched pictures for subject matter rather than formal relations, and condemned whatever failed to correspond to their view of "things as they really are." But even in condemning subjects, they tripped up on contradictions. They scrawled some graffiti on the wall over a cluster of Expressionist paintings: "German farmers—a Yiddish view." But none of the painters was Jewish. Indeed, only six of the 112 artists represented in the original exhibition were Jews. Of all the isms deplored in the show, "Jewish-Bolshevism" seems the most farfetched. In fact, the very notion of "degeneracy" derived in large part from the work of a Jew, Nordau's *Degeneration*.

It may be misleading to look for coherence in the art abominated by the Nazis, for abominations always involve generic confusion. That is why they arouse such emotion, according to Mary Douglas. The need to draw a line is felt most urgently where boundaries are most threatened. Not only was Germany surrounded by hostile powers in 1937, but the aesthetic dimension of the hostility kept getting blurred. To the south, the Nazis' fascist ally had embraced modern art in the form of Italian futurism, and to the east, their Bolshevik enemy had expunged modernism and adopted a variety of "socialist realism" that looked disturbingly like the works exhibited in the House of German Art. Indeed, after the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact, Molotov reportedly informed Arno Breker that Stalin admired the Nazi style of statuary and thought it would inspire the Soviet people. And long before they discovered this common aesthetic ground, the Stalinists had branded as "fascist" the same kind of art that the Nazis condemned as "Bolshevik."

If boundary confusion and conceptual messiness belong to the nature of the taboo, it does not seem surprising that the Nazis mixed up the forbidden artists (they mistook a Klee for a Kandinsky and hung two Kandinskys vertically instead of horizontally) or even that they exhibited works by the same sculptor, Rudolf Belling, in both the orthodox and the "degenerate" exhibitions. But taboos are also dangerous. When some veterans of World War I saw paintings by Franz Marc exhibited as "degenerate," they protested, and the works were removed. Like Kandinsky and Klee, Marc was a visionary who saw spiritual power in color and form. But he was also a German patriot who had been killed at Verdun—and his case was far less embarrassing than that of Emil Nolde.

In his memoirs, Speer tells of a visit by Hitler to Goebbels's ministerial residence in mid-1933. Speer had just redecorated the place in impeccable Nazi style, and to brighten up the walls he had hung some Nolde watercolors borrowed from the Nationalgalerie. Goebbels was delighted with the pictures, but Hitler found them hideous, and so they had to go. When the Nazis first seized power, they did not spontaneously recognize "degeneration" in Nolde's work. On the contrary, its strong colors seemed to express the vital forces of the Nordic soil. Nolde himself understood it that way, and he had joined the party in 1920.

A left-wing group of Nazi intellectuals rose to Nolde's defense in 1933. "It cannot be denied that it was the New Art itself which prepared the way for the national revolution," they declared, and they listed the artists who had done most for the cause: Otto Mueller, Karl Schmidt-Rottluff, Max Pechstein, Franz Marc, Paul Klee, Lyonel Feininger, Mies van der Rohe, and many more—the very men who were most abused in the exhibition of 1937. Nolde stood out from all the rest: the Nazis confiscated 1,052 of his works, far more than those of artists who were openly hostile to Hitlerism, such as Max Beckmann (509 confiscations) and George Grosz (285).

Is it pushing the paradox too far to argue that the Nazis felt most threatened by precisely the art with which they had most in common, with the "blood and earth" variety of Expressionism that celebrated the national, the irrational, and the Nordic? Perhaps that is why they felt compelled to draw the line as brutally as they did in 1937.

The Nolde watercolors requisitioned for Goebbels from the modern section of the Nationalgalerie exposed an affinity with the radical side of the Nazi "revolution." After the elimination of the Sturmabteilung (SA) in 1934, that tendency suddenly looked heretical, and Goebbels's rival, Alfred Rosenberg, tried to discredit him by championing a more folkish variety of "blood and earth"—genre pictures of stalwart peasants guiding plows and blond mothers nursing babes. But that sort of art easily shaded off into kitsch, a heresy on the other side of the Nazi aesthetic. Hitler's own painting—there are photographs of it in a video shown at the Los Angeles exhibition—appears thoroughly like kitsch today, and his taste, according to Speer, gravitated toward the saccharine genre pictures of Eduard Grützner. But in his Table Talk, Hitler claimed that Nazism had finally eliminated the "*Kitsch-problem*," a serious matter of "our folkish and cultural self-regard." He saw a double danger represented ironically by his two most faithful apostles of anti-Semitism and anti-Bolshevism: on one side Goebbels and Expressionism, on the other Rosenberg and kitsch. In the end, he condemned both tendencies and aligned the Reich with muscular Hellinism.

The Führer beset by aesthetic angst. It seems absurd especially when seen in retrospect from Los Angeles, but Hitler had underscored the connection between art and politics in the first chapter of *Mein Kampf*: "Since I had become a political 'revolutionary' at so early a stage, it was not much later that I became an 'artistic' one." Hitler's *Kampf* was a *Kulturkampf*.

And so was German history in general. Lacking clear borders, internal unity, and a centralized state, the Germans had identified themselves by their *Kultur* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As Norbert Elias put it in 1936:

> The concept of *Kultur* mirrors the self-consciousness of a nation which had constantly to seek out and constitute its boundaries anew, in a political as well as a spiritual sense, and again and again had to ask itself: "What is really our identity?" The orientation of the German concept of culture, with its tendency toward demarcation and the emphasis on and detailing of differences between groups, corresponds to this historical process.

Aesthetics and politics addressed a common concern for borders and lines of demarcation. By attempting to define genuine German *Kultur*, the Nazis struggled with a political problem; and in enforcing their definition with the butts of their rifles, they confronted dangers that threatened them on all sides. They knew that they had only the flimsiest claim to legitimacy; and so they tried to shore themselves up by erecting boundaries against everything they conceived to be heretical, degenerate, and impure. Drawing lines, defining borders, ruling in and ruling out: the problems of Nazi statecraft ran parallel to the problems of modern art.

Not that Hitler had any understanding of modernism. His pronouncements t[illegible] "the sickly excrescences of lunatics or of degenerate people which since the turn of the century we have learned to know under the collective conception of cubism or dadaism" revealed the limitations of a lumpen intellectual. But he pointed to fault lines that ran through German history, and his audience understood him in that way. "With this exhibition," commented the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* in an account of Hitler's speech at

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he House of German Art on July 19, 937, "a final line has been drawn to an poch by means of the will of the ührer."

By annihilating modern art, Hitler hought he was laying the foundation of ı Thousand Year Reich. In fact, he only gave vent to collective obsessions about social boundaries. Seen from the perspective of Los Angeles in 1991, the line against modernism drawn in Munich in 1937 led directly to disaster. Instead of initiating a cleansing of the temple, it marked the end of an era of creativity, the collapse of *Kultur*, and the fall of the House of German Art. ●

Making It

BY TOMAS VENCLOVA

The Collected Poems: 1952-1990
by Yevgeny Yevtushenko
edited by Albert C. Todd with the author and James Ragan
(Henry Holt, 662 pp., $29.95)

Fatal Half Measures:
The Culture of Democracy in the Soviet Union
by Yevgeny Yevtushenko
edited and translated by Antonina W. Bouis
(Little, Brown, 357 pp., $21.95)

An interesting article by Yevgeny Yevtushenko, part essay, part memoir, recently appeared in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* in Moscow, in which the poet dwells at length on his skirmishes with Soviet reactionaries. The title of the article is "Fencing with a Pile of Dung," which is meant to be a bold metaphor. Among other tales, Yevtushenko tells the story of his visit to the pre-perestroika Kremlin, where he was to be honored with the Order of the Red Banner:

> The Order was presented by a vice chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, an Azerbaijani whose last name I cannot, for the life of me, recall. Pinning the order to the lapel of my jacket and inviting me to a hunting party in Azerbaijan, he awkwardly pierced my jacket, my shirt, and even pricked me. It was rather painful. The Kremlin people hurt me often enough. They hurt others, too.

The next story deals with the presentation of a State Prize to Yevtushenko in 1984 for his long poem "Momma and the Neutron Bomb." "The censorship office attempted to ban the poem," he writes, "but it did not succeed." Yevtushenko took his medal and his certificate (and his money). According to the requirements of Soviet protocol, he was expected to express his gratitude to the Party at the ceremony. His wrath was so impossible to contain, however, that he neglected etiquette and returned to his seat without breaking his proud silence. His bravery, he tells us, inspired several other recipients of the prize, who also refused to say thanks.

Now, there is something fundamentally wrong about this picture. You are pampered by a totalitarian government, or you are persecuted by it. You are given honors and awards by party functionaries, or you are not. You are invited to their hunting parties, or you are their open enemy. But both cannot happen to you at the same time. Andrei Sakharov received perks similar to Yevtushenko's while he was busy with the Soviet nuclear program; but later his moral rectitude led him to the camp of the dissidents, and the world knows what followed. You see, you cannot fence with a pile of dung. You either sink into it or you leave it. To pretend otherwise requires extraordinary cynicism, extraordinary naïveté, or both. When Yevtushenko implicitly compares the pain caused by that pricking pin to the sufferings of Sakharov, Pasternak, and many, many others, he goes beyond the limits of naïveté, and even of cynicism. He approaches the obscene.

The case of Yevtushenko is one of the most unusual cases of our times. (Stanislaw Baranczak recently listed it, in *Newsday*, among the top ten hoaxes of the twentieth century.) Two large books by Yevtushenko, which just appeared in En-

The Great Wall of China
From History to Myth
Arthur Waldron
"One of the few books that change our basic assumptions about China".
—*PublishersWeekly*
Cambridge Studies in Chinese History, Literature and Institutions
Hardcover $39.50
Available in better bookstores or by writing to:
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211

Learn Japanese On Your Own!
You can learn to speak Japanese on your own with *Audio-Forum's* self-instructional book/cassette course. Developed by Eleanor Harz Jorden, world-famous author, *Beginning Japanese* offers 11½ to 30 hours of recorded material, which is almost *50% more* than any other self-instructional Japanese course!
Course consists of a series of cassettes and accompanying textbook. Your cassette player becomes your "teaching machine." You learn where and when you want to, and at your own pace. Available in two parts, each is shipped in a handsome library binder. Order either, or save 10% by ordering both:
☐ **Beginning Japanese, Part 1.** 8 cassettes (11½ hr.) and 409-p. text, $175.
☐ **Beginning Japanese, Part 2.** 16 cassettes (19 hr.) and 410-p. text, $215.
(CT residents add sales tax)
Phone orders call toll-free: **1-800-243-1234**
To order, clip this ad and send with your name and address, and a check or money order – or charge to your credit card (VISA, MasterCard, AmEx, Diners) by enclosing card number, expiration date, and your signature.
Unconditionally guaranteed. Try it for three weeks – if you are not fully satisfied, we'll refund every penny you've paid.
We offer 191 courses in 56 languages; send for free catalog.
AUDIO-FORUM®
Room E531 96 Broad Street
Guilford, CT 06437

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

glish, provide an opportunity to study it more closely. The first is a volume of verse put into English by many translators, including some of the masters of the language. The second is a collection of political speeches, essays, travelogues, and divagations on Russian writers. Both books are provided with rapturous introductions and blurbs: the author is "the legendary Russian literary leader," "a people's poet in the tradition of Walt Whitman," "a seeker of Truth like all great writers," and so on. It seems that many members in good standing of the American literary establishment consider these descriptions to be true, or at least partly true. Unfortunately, they are false.

One thing has to be admitted: Yevtushenko is an incredibly prolific writer who is endowed with a buoyant personality. He is not only a versifier and an essayist, but also a scriptwriter, a film director, an actor, a photographer, a novelist, a political figure, and a world traveler—a Soviet cultural emissary in virtually all parts of the globe, which is a function that he inherited from Vladimir Mayakovsky and Ilya Erenburg, who played the same role on a less extensive scale. In his tender years, Yevtushenko was also a goalkeeper and a folk dancer of repute.

The amount of energy, the sheer labor, devoted to all these enterprises cannot fail to impress. Yevtushenko says about himself, without false modesty but not without reason: "my fate is supernatural, / my destiny astonishing." Sixty-four countries visited by 1976 (by now the number is larger) and forty-six books of original poetry so far—this certainly is supernatural, if we recall that permission to travel abroad once or twice was the sweetest dream of almost any Soviet writer before the Gorbachev era, and that many good poets of the USSR considered themselves lucky if they managed to publish a slim and heavily blue-penciled volume once in a decade. On top of all that, we learn (from his editor Antonina W. Bouis) that Yevtushenko "has been banned, threatened, censored, and punished," though he has not been imprisoned.

The tales of Yevtushenko's tribulations are not totally unfounded. In the beginning, he did not fit snugly into the Procrustean bed of Stalinist literature, and he was attacked by some of the worst hacks of the period, not least by the anti-Semites. (Yevtushenko has no Jewish background, but his Latvian father's last name, Gangnus, looked suspicious.) Yet the controversy about Yevtushenko was always a quarrel *within* the Soviet literary framework. Yevtushenko never displayed the slightest inclination to work outside it.

A fight within the Soviet establishment, even if it is conducted for a liberal cause, is bound to degenerate into a fight for the benevolence of the authorities. In this regard, Yevtushenko happened to be more skillful, and incomparably more successful, than his dull opponents. And so they never forgave him. Yevtushenko is still denounced by the lunatic fringe, by the Pamyat people and their supporters. (Pamyat has done him a great favor: its opposition has been adduced as proof of his credentials as a humanist and a fighter for freedom.) Much less publicized is the fact that democratic and dissident Soviet critics exposed Yevtushenko's literary weaknesses and moral vacillations long ago and mercilessly. Today hardly anyone in that literary community considers his work worthy of serious study.

He started out, in 1949, at the age of 16, as an average if precocious maker of Soviet-style poems. His first book appeared at the very nadir of Stalinism, in 1952, and suited the time rather nicely: it was optimistic, full of clichés, and boring. But after coming from his native Siberia to the Moscow Literary Institute, Yevtushenko felt the first timid stirrings of the post-Stalin mood and expressed them, too, in his verses. This stage of his poetry is amply represented in the new English collection. In the era of glasnost, it looks antediluvian. Still, there is something attractive in it: youthful sentimentality, straightforward intonation, impetuous imagery.

Yevtushenko was among the first writers of the period to introduce into his work a slice of real Soviet life—of the so-called *byt*, the daily grind of tedium, hardship, and deprivation. Here and there he mentioned queues, dirty staircases, bedbugs, fences with obscene inscriptions, and so on. (Later even such taboo subjects as condoms and drinking eau de cologne appeared in his lyrics.) He also wrote about love and its betrayals; and though they are essentially Victorian, those poems provoked attacks on Yevtushenko as an advocate of promiscuity.

His early verses can be read as an anthology of modes and fads of the bygone days. Some of his heroes (including the narrator) were *stilyagas*, the scornful name for a member of the Soviet "golden youth" who were fond of Western clothes, dances, and so on—a sort of mixture of hippie and yuppie; and the message of Yevtushenko's poetry was that they were good Soviet people who would bravely fight for their socialist fatherland. Yevtushenko played up his Siberian heritage, moreover, and employed al the trivial mythology of Siberia—not th land of the Gulag, but the magnificen wilderness inhabited by rough and hon est men. And he emphasized his mani festly difficult childhood ("I started ou as a lonely wolf cub"). All these traits were at their most obvious in the long poem "Zima Junction," which ap peared in 1955. It made Yevtushenko's reputation.

"Zima Junction," a narrative poem about Yevtushenko's visit to his native Siberia, very cautiously touched the political sensitivities of its era: the so-called Doctors' Plot, Stalin's death, the fall of Beria. On the whole, it was full of the usual stuff—decent Chekists, naive but nice Red cavalrymen, upright but flawed Russian peasants, and the author himself, a young lad in search of a way to serve his country. It was attacked by literary conservatives, but it was also instrumental in generating strong support for Yevtushenko in some circles of the Party among people whose background and experience were similar to his own. There is a persistent rumor that Mikhail Gorbachev was one of them.

Today Yevtushenko states that "in 1953 it seemed I was all the dissidents rolled up into one." And "the early poetry of my generation is the cradle of glasnost." Such revelations are less than modest. In addition, they are untrue. There were many thousands of dissidents in 1953. Most of them were in prison camps or in internal exile. Some of them, like Pasternak, Akhmatova, and Nadezhda Mandelshtam, were still at large, but they were totally cut off from their readers and from the general public. Glasnost—to be more precise, the revolution taking place in the Soviet Union today—was the fruit of their untold suffering, and their incredibly stubborn efforts to maintain moral and cultural standards during that era of contempt. Yevtushenko and his ilk, in other words, took the place that rightfully belonged to others. They promoted literature and ideology that was adapted to their totalitarian milieu, into which they introduced a measure of half truth and half decency.

Many Western critics are fond of uncovering the influences of Mayakovsky, Yesenin, Pasternak, and Blok in Yevtushenko's poetry, thereby suggesting that he is a rightful heir to the giants. The poet himself never tires of invoking their shades, although he does not transcend the level of schoolboyish clichés when he talks about their heritage. His real mentors, however, were second-rate, incurably Soviet, and largely obscure poets such as Stepan Shchipachev, Mikhail Svetlov, Aleksandr Mezhirov, and Kon-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stantin Vanshenkin. (Numerous dedications to them can be found throughout *The Collected Poems.*)

For a time their heir Yevtushenko surpassed them, since he became genuinely popular. His popularity might have been owed in part to his great histrionic gifts. As Andrei Sinyavsky has observed, Yevtushenko managed to revive the theatrical concept of a poet's destiny (rejected by Pasternak, but characteristic of Mayakovsky and Tsvetaeva), according to which a poet's biography had to become an integral part, even the principal part, of his or her work. Readers and audiences had to be well acquainted with a poet's personal life, with his or her everyday dramas. For Mayakovsky and Tsvetaeva, the theatrics were genuinely tragic. For Yevtushenko, in accordance with the worn Marxist dictum, they tended to be farcical.

He succeeded in creating an image of a nice guy, an old chap, a macho simpleton who matter-of-factly recounts his family problems, his sexual exploits, his daily chores and daily doubts. Yevtushenko's audience of Soviet youths, immature and disoriented after several decades of Stalinist isolation, longing for a touch of sincerity, hungrily gulped down anything "Western" and "modern," and adopted Yevtushenko (together with Voznesensky and several others) as their idol. This did not last too long; the more sophisticated part of the audience found real, previously suppressed Russian poetry, and the other and larger part became rather apathetic to all poetry, including Yevtushenko's.

I should acknowledge that two early poems by Yevtushenko made history. Politically, if not poetically, they have a lasting place in the annals of Soviet liberalism. "Babii Yar" (1961) treated anti-Semitic tendencies in Russian life, and provoked a rabid reaction in fascist and fascistoid circles. It was a noble public act, perhaps the high point of Yevtushenko's personal and political career. And it differs favorably from Voznesensky's poems on the same topic; it is more measured, discreet, and restrained, and it avoids formal experimentation and the homespun surrealism that is decidedly out of place when one speaks about the Holocaust. Still, it is poetically feeble, and full of sentimental clichés ("Anne Frank / transparent as a branch in April"). But perhaps these weaknesses may be overlooked.

The other famous poem is "The Heirs of Stalin" (1962). In its case, the situation is different. Most likely "Babii Yar" was a spontaneous outpouring. "The Heirs of Stalin" was a calculated gamble, a move in the intra-Party game of old-fashioned Stalinists and Khrushchevian liberals. It did not avoid dubious statements, like "prison camps are empty." (In 1962 they were not.) "The Heirs of Stalin" impressed Khrushchev and was printed in *Pravda.* Yevtushenko had managed to place his bet on the winning horse. In his memoirs of the time, the poet portrays himself as a virtual outcast, but the scene that follows in his telling leaves the reader a bit doubtful about the depth of his predicament. At a reception in Havana, presumably in Castro's residence, where Mikoyan also is present, Yevtushenko picks up the issue of *Pravda* with his provocative poem. "[Mikoyan] handed Castro the newspaper. Mikoyan apparently thought that I knew all about it and was rather shocked to see me practically tear the newspaper out of Castro's hands." Hardly an episode in the life of a freedom fighter.

YEVGENY YEVTUSHENKO BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Of course the world traveler did not confine himself to Cuba. Travelogues in verse and prose, including long and not terribly interesting poems on Chile, Japan, the United States, and other places, make up a very considerable part of his creative output. The Western establishment, eager for reassuring signs of moral and cultural revival in Russia, was encouraged by the sight of an audacious person who seemed enlightened and tractable compared with the typical Soviet *nyet* people. And the advertising tricks usually reserved for movie stars were trotted out on the poet's behalf, which increased his already appreciable vanity. (Yevtushenko proudly recounts instances when a Western cultural figure called him "Mayakovsky's son.")

Some misunderstandings with the authorities ensued. Some credit must be given to Yevtushenko, since he behaved with dignity even when he was assaulted by Khrushchev himself. (At his famous meeting with the intelligentsia, Khrushchev delivered himself of the Russian proverb that "hunchbacks are corrected by the grave," at which Yevtushenko retorted: "The time when people were corrected by the grave has passed.") Still, it was as clear as the noon sun that he remained totally loyal to the Party, even if he was a bit heterodox in secondary matters. Thus the campaign against him fizzled. In 1964 he expiated his sins by writing the long poem "Bratsk Hydroelectric Station." The poem, long selections of which are included in the English volume, marked a new stage in Yevtushenko's development: an era of resourceful compromises, cheating moves, and clever adaptations to existing conditions (which became more and more stifling after Khrushchev's removal in October 1964). The poet himself pictured his rushing about as a wise stratagem serving the liberal cause. But not many

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Russian and non-Russian intellectuals agreed with him; the dissident movement virtually discarded Yevtushenko as an ally. And that was irreversible.

"Bratsk Hydroelectric Station" is a paean to one of the typical Soviet industrial projects in Siberia. (Today such projects, usually unprofitable and fraught with ecological disasters, are repudiated by public opinion, and even by the government itself.) The central part of the poem consists of an argument between an Egyptian pyramid and the Siberian powerhouse: the former symbolizes all the conservative and enslaving tendencies of history (Stalinism supposedly included), while the latter defends the cause of idealist faith and human emancipation. Yevtushenko overlooked the fact that the opposition is far from perfect: slave labor or near-slave labor played an approximately identical part in building both monuments. And the forces of freedom are represented in the poem by rather dubious figures. One of them is Stenka Razin, leader of a savage peasant revolt in the seventeenth century, whose confessions sound chilling ("No, it is not in this I have sinned, my people, / for hanging boyars from the towers. / I have sinned in my own eyes in this, / that I hanged too few of them"). There is also a scene where young Lenin (never named but perfectly recognizable) guides a drunken woman (supposedly Mother Russia) by the elbow, and she blesses him as her true son. This transformation of Lenin into a Christ-like figure insulted equally the followers of Lenin and the followers of Christ.

Virtually the same applies to many of Yevtushenko's later poetic works. The long poem "Kazan University" (1970) described czarist Russia with some wit and verve. Reactionary tendencies of the nineteenth century brought to mind Brezhnevian stagnation, and the liberal scholar Lesgaft, harassed by the authorities, might be easily interpreted as a forebear of Sakharov. But the university of Kazan was also the breeding ground for Lenin, who, according to the author (and to the Soviet textbooks), was the crown prince of Russian democracy. Never mind that Lenin was the very opposite of democracy—and that he never attempted to conceal it. Transforming him into a prophet of human rights, of brotherhood and justice, into a Gandhi or a Sakharov *avant la lettre*, is nauseating. (It is also un-Marxist.)

Many of Yevtushenko's poems on Western topics are characterized by the same double-think. He rangues against the "doltish regime" of Salazar, against the Chilean murderers or American bureaucrats ("Under the Skin of the Statue of Liberty," 1968) can be construed as transparent allegories: in fact, the poet is attacking native Soviet deficiencies. But at the same time the attacks perfectly conform to the general tenor of the Party's propaganda; Salazar, Pinochet, the FBI, and the Pentagon always were convenient bugaboos, and in that capacity helped the Party to keep the people silent and loyal. Moreover, the general picture of the West in these poems is usually touristy and superficial. Fascinated by material standards and the ever changing fashions of the First World, Yevtushenko nevertheless mythologizes his role as "the ambassador of all the oppressed" and a Russian (and Soviet) patriot. There are also endless exhortations for peaceful coexistence and friendship of peoples ("Russia and America, / Swim closer!"), essentially noble, but less than irreproachable in the era of détente.

The poet's editors and promoters tend to emphasize his heroic gestures during the crisis periods in the USSR. It is true that he sent a telegram to Brezhnev protesting the Czech invasion. It is also said that he phoned Andropov to express his intention to die on the barricades if Solzhenitsyn were imprisoned. But his protests were incomparably more cautious, and much less resonant, than the protests of real dissenters, who paid with their freedom. And the telegram to Brezhnev has the air of an intimate exchange of views between allies: Yevtushenko speaks in it about "our action," which is a damaging mistake, "a great gift to all the reactionary forces in the world." The poem "Russian Tanks in Prague," moreover, was circulated secretly and reached a very limited circle, so as to avoid doing any harm to the poet's career.

A poet's dubious moral and political stance does not always preclude good poetry. In Yevtushenko's case, though, it does. His verses, as a rule, do not belong to the realm of poetry at all. They are made up of middlebrow journalism and an interminable flow of didactic chatter;

Chagall's "Les Plumes en Fleur"

At first glimpse an unearthly efflorescence,
exquisite spray, drift, swirl. The lightest
touch or heaviness of breath would blow
delicate blushes of blue pink lemon snow

apart from the high white stamen-head that offers
some essence of the flowering self to another.
Or, at second glance, a fair head rising
from a nest of the very self, comb-capped, surprising,

the head of a hen, beak open, uttering
with perfect openness its messages,
the river of blood that rises from heart to word
dyeing with carmine the chaste neck of the bird.

The eye in the profiled head is huge and black.
Above and beyond lie the many valences
of darkness; that dark has poured into the well-pit
of eye, whose deep holding has gentled it.

Receiving the gift to his eyes and ears, a horse
leans in from the dark, his head half-bowed, too shy
to show the fiery surge of his love and pleasure.
Half-dreading to look, abashed, he has turned to azure.

For who can take in the full splendor of self
when it opens the door and, feathery as a light,
reveals itself to the waiting, uncandled one,
its voice arising out of its heavenly home-spun?

And how can my heavy pen bring forth a shimmering
word for this beauty of self displayed in friendship?
Then *Prêtez-moi*, I pray, *pour écrire un mot,*
la plume, birds-in-blossom, *mes Pierrots*!

MONA VAN DUYN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they have virtually nothing in common with the true problems of modern (or any) poetics. For all his declarations of ardor and fervor, Yevtushenko is hackneyed, kitschy, and lukewarm. On almost every page you stumble on something like "eyelashes laden / with tears and storms," or "eyes half-shut with ecstasy and pain." Melodramatic effusions ("My love is a demolished church / above the turbid river of memories") alternate with revelations worthy of a sex manual ("When we love, / nothing is base or tasteless. / When we love, / nothing is shameful.").

I am trying not to be unfair. There are some concessions I must make in Yevtushenko's favor. He is usually free of Voznesensky's pretentiousness. You can find in his books good similes, successful vignettes of daily life, touching characters, and hair-raising stories that may, alas, be true. And his weaknesses become more obvious in translation. I would be inclined to praise such poems as "Hand-rolled Cigarettes" or "The Ballad of the Big Stamp" (the latter is hilarious, though it suffers in translation since it lacks a factual commentary about Russian religious sects). And of course Yevtushenko is a figure to reckon with because of his inexhaustible energy. But all these attractive traits are deeply tainted by his taste for comfort and accommodation, by his eagerness to play humiliating games with the censors, by the mixture of self-admiration, self-pity, and coquettish self-deprecation that has become his indelible mark.

Today Yevtushenko is a member—by no means the leader—of the liberal wing of the perestroika establishment. His book of journalistic prose, *Fatal Half Measures*, from which I have quoted extensively, traces his political career between 1962, when *A Precocious Autobiography*, published in the West, caused a passing commotion, and 1990, when his speeches resounded, rather hollowly, in several public forums. The book is preceded by a poem in which Yevtushenko seems to be admonishing Gorbachev: "Don't half recoil, / lost in broad daylight, / half rebel, / half suppressor / of the half insurrection / you gave birth to..."

But the book's title perfectly applies to the poet's own style of action. Fatal half measures, indeed. Yevtushenko lags desperately behind events. The gap between his wordy, complacent prose and the Soviet public mood became unbridgeable long ago. In the book, Yevtushenko launches crusades against nuclear war, against the monopoly of the Party, against Russian chauvinism, against cruelty to animals, and lots of other unsavory phenomena. Most of his thoughts on these topics are with the angels. But they are still wrapped in the old Soviet discourse, and that discourse is finally as dead as nails. He strives to improve his fatherland without rejecting the main part of the ideology that makes such a project hopeless. He is what he always was, a man of fatal half truths, of fatal half measures. In this way, he is the counterpart of his presumably avid reader Gorbachev. Both attempt to promote something like totalitarianism with a human face. It never worked. It never will.

TOMAS VENCLOVA, a Lithuanian writer, teaches Russian and Polish literature at Yale University.

London Psycho

BY SVEN BIRKERTS

The Women of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper by Paul West

(Random House, 420 pp., $22)

In a recently published interview, Paul West spoke tellingly about the psychic process that underlies his writing. "All the time, whatever I'm doing," he said,

> I hear this noise in my head that really never goes away. . . . Like a squeaky conveyor belt. There's always something on it, and perhaps that something isn't useful all the time. When a novel begins, there's just more on the belt, just images and phrases, really quite obsessive things start coming along, and I ask, "What's this? Is this worth pursuing?"

Writers, like real people, can often be typed according to what the psychologist David Shapiro called "neurotic styles." West is clearly a compulsive, a writer who could not *not* write. Indeed, the British-born West is probably our leading graphomaniac (after Joyce Carol Oates), completing books in various genres faster than most of us are able to write a shopping list.

Counting his newest work, this writer who just last year turned 50 has brought out fourteen novels, including the acclaimed *Rat Man of Paris*, *The Very Rich Hours of Count von Stauffenberg*, and *Lord Byron's Doctor*; a clutch of criticism; several books of poetry; and various altogether sui generis nonfictions, among them *Words For a Deaf Daughter*, *Out of My Depths: A Swimmer in the Universe*, and, just last year, *Portable People*, a charming collection of invented monologues by historical figures. It would be one thing if West were simply productive, but he is productive across a wide range and at a high level of artistic attainment.

He is less like Oates, in fact, and more like Anthony Burgess. Both writers are maximalists, lovers not only of the word but of the sweeping long sentences and logjam paragraphs that characterize a certain kind of baroque English prose style. Both are broadly lettered, addicted to odd bits of lore as well as deviations, heresies, and unexpected byways of thought. Both have a special proclivity for inhabiting historical figures and re-creating the world through their eyes. But Burgess is known and celebrated, while West awaits his apotheosis. His career to date has illustrated the forest-for-trees paradox: if you do too much of a good thing, you are as apt to be overlooked as if you had done nothing at all.

The Women of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper may change that. It is superbly written and intricately choreographed, a work both sensational and serious. On one level it is a telling of the gruesome Jack the Ripper murders that horrified London in the late 1880s. But it is also a fabulous word-portrait of the Victorian lower depths, of the street life of women whose circumstances left them no recourse but prostitution. And it is also a searching meditation on the less savory machinations of social and political power, as well as on the ambivalence that is sometimes found at the root of the artistic temperament.

West acknowledges in a prefatory note that his account is novelistic, and that he will be taking certain liberties with the historical record. He also remarks, however, that the line between history and literature is not always clearly inscribed. "Years ago I found out, when researching the Nazis for my novel about Claus von Stauffenberg, that historians compulsively embroider and embellish; when I got to the facts, the fiction had already begun." The unsolved Jack the Ripper case along with the per-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sistent but unprovable rumors about the involvement of the royal family have given West richly ambiguous terrain to mine.

Perhaps the greatest of the liberties he has taken is his casting of the painter Walter Sickert (1860-1942) in a central role—indeed, implicating him in the actual murders. I have found no basis for this in accounts of Sickert's life. West has taken the great risk of moving the dare-you line separating fiction and fact. It was one thing for Tolstoy to maneuver Napoleon for his own fictional ends, another for E. L. Doctorow to have Jung and Freud visiting Coney Island. But here is an author actually tampering with the reputation of a historical figure. Why not cast Stalin as a well-meaning but overworked friend of the people?

Why Sickert would suit his purposes, though, is easy to see. His position allows him to have connections among the higher social echelons, even with the royal family, while his vocation and his temperament encourage him to consort with the women of Cleveland Street, where he keeps his studio. Moreover, as an artist bent on peering into the darkest pockets of human experience, and on exploring the taboo, he is the perfect medium for West's thematic concerns.

The basic plot is as follows. Through a friend with close ties to the royal family, Sickert is entrusted with the task of chaperoning Prince Eddy, Queen Victoria's grandson, during his frequent London escapades. Eddy is a problem case—illiterate, open-hearted, utterly impulsive in his lusts. Though he prefers to spend much of his time in London in a male brothel, Sickert introduces him to Annie Crook, a young Scotswoman turned prostitute. The two fall in love, and soon Annie is with child. The royal family intervenes, arranging for the lovers to be separately abducted; Eddy is taken into protective custody, while Annie is hied away to Guy's Hospital, where Sir William Gull, Physician to the Queen, expertly lobotomizes her. Annie lives out most of the rest of her life in a dingy hospital, drooling and insensate. Her child, Alice Margaret, is passed along to the royal nannies, and much later ends up as Sickert's ward.

More ghoulish complications ensue when Mary Kelly, a prostitute friend of Annie's and sometime model for Sickert, writes a blackmail letter to the queen and, thinking to add weight to her appeal, gets a number of her cronies to add their signatures. These women, who all live from one glass of gin to the next, and who worry mainly about finding the next customer and a doss for the night, have no notion of what a terrible process they have set into motion. But in the remote precincts of power the nod is given—the subtle, untraceable nod. As West puts it: "He [Sickert] knew how things got done, how one old boy lovely phrasing shaded his preference into the other's pragmatism, and something happened, although nobody quite remembered why, such was the onrush of events, the terrible Niagara of Empire."

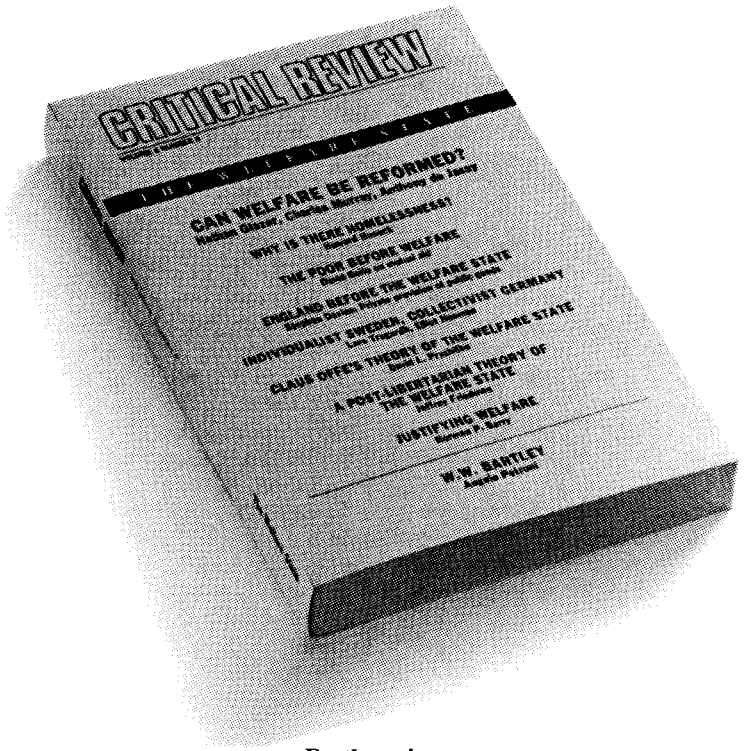
That "something" takes explicit, blood-curdling form in the person of Sir William Gull. Apart from being a distinguished man of science and a power in the Masonic brotherhood, Gull was also "the silencer, one of life's more questionable addicts, a lover of the half light and in-between states, an infernally wound-up doer of lofty commands." He sets about systematically to track down the signatories, luring them into a horse-drawn van called Crusader, where he plies them with doctored grapes. Then, clip-clopping through the London night, he slashes them with a zeal that will very likely make the reader gag. Each murder is more horripilating than the previous one. By the end Gull is carving Masonic symbols into his victims' flesh and performing prodigies of evisceration.

Beside him in the van, anguished and

CRITICAL REVIEW

Special Issue: **THE WELFARE STATE**

Leading scholars debate the viability of the democratic welfare state.


CRITICAL REVIEW
CAN WELFARE BE REFORMED?
WHY IS THERE HOMELESSNESS?
THE POOR BEFORE WELFARE
ENGLAND BEFORE THE WELFARE STATE
INDIVIDUALISM ENFEEBLED, COLLECTIVISM ENGULFED GERMANY
CLAUS OFFE'S THEORY OF THE WELFARE STATE
A POST-LIBERTARIAN THEORY OF THE WELFARE STATE
JUSTIFYING WELFARE
W.W. BARTLEY

Forthcoming:

Harold Demsetz, Laurence Dickey, John Ellis, John Gray, Will Kymlicka, Martin Malia, Donald McCloskey, Raymond Plant, L.A. Siedentop, Charles Taylor, Jeremy Waldron, Andrzej Walicki, Murray Weidenbaum, Aaron Wildavsky...

Individual subscriptions received by May 20 will begin with free copy of welfare state issue.
1-yr. subscriptions (4 iss. *plus* welfare state iss.) $29 U.S., $35 foreign. Institutions $49. Visa/MC no. or check to: **CRITICAL REVIEW**, 942 Howard Street, Dept. D3, San Francisco CA 94103
ISSN 0891-3811

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fascinated in spite of himself, sits Walter Sickert. Sickert has always been drawn to the dark side. At one point early in the novel, he fantasizes about watching convicts work at fetching up mutilated corpses from the Thames:

> He always wanted extremes, even if only to paint what was middling and middle-of-the-road. "Otherwise, gentlemen," he'd always say, "we have no north, no south. . . ." He doted on the prospect of green marrow-fat remnants—human sirloins—afloat on the river as toiling convicts dropped them. . . .

but as the old wisdom has it, one best be careful what one wishes for because it may be granted. It is a sort of justice that Gull should tap him to attend his ghoulish rites, and that Sickert should find himself unable to refuse. "What had once been his natural morbidity, his love of the gutter as a subject and a theme," writes West, "had now become a trap, no longer optional."

West has set up the old devil's bargain: Sickert has had to trade his will, his moral compass, for his artist's ability to reckon true north. And though he thinks through countless ways to escape these midnight rides, and is ever at the point of tipping off the prospective victims, something stops him. He must concede that he finds these bodily desecrations strangely riveting. Staring at the gore, the shapes and the colors, there comes a moment when metaphysical curiosity overpowers the regard for the human. And this, certainly from the perspective of the novel, is the gravest danger, graver even than the psychopathology of a Gull. For *that* we can at least understand as insanity.

The perpetrators are eventually punished for their sins. Though Gull is never officially apprehended, his fellow Masons, after giving him a testimonial dinner, "first stuffing him with food then quietening him with grapes, took him away to the inferior purlieu of Islington and put him in a straitjacket in a private asylum there. . . ." He dies, insane, a few years later. Sickert, meanwhile, lives on for long years; he takes in Annie and Eddy's daughter, Alice Margaret, who eventually bears him a son. He becomes one of the self-condemned. "Weary of being a painter's painter, he slaved on, afflicted by sudden bouts of weeping, but trying to close the drawer full of blood that kept sliding open in his mind. . . ." He later works on a series of paintings called *The Camden Town Murder*. "This particular murder," we are informed, "had taken place in 1907, but he was really painting 1888." Sickert's punishment, we gather, is that he has to continue to be Sickert, with sanity a more fitting torment than any dementia.

West has worked a thread of fierce moral interrogation throughout the book. It brings tension and shape to what threatens, in places, to become an uninflected backdrop account of the lives and doings of the victims-to-be. His gift, as his own conveyor-belt analogy suggests, is for the sentence-by-sentence accumulation of impressions, not for structure. Left to itself, one senses, the prose would just build to a cataract and push all else before it. His subject, fortunately, requires certain architectonics, and West obliges, varying his voices and breaking up the slow-movement passages with well-timed shifts of perspective.

West is very adept at writing descriptions and catching the syncopations of conversation among familiars. He is sure, too, in his renderings of atmosphere, especially the disheveled rooms and gin mills where the women gather. The women themselves, while not deeply differentiated as characters, are convincing—plucky, foul-mouthed, sentimental but never sentimentalized. When they take the stage, as they often do, the language bubbles with cockney idioms. Here, for instance, we are made privy to Mary Kelly's night-thoughts, in the hour when, as West puts it, "her vernacular came alive":

> Oh to drive through the Park in a pony phaeton, even if empty-bellied and scared to death you'll finish as a bag of bones under the floor to be dug up in 1900. My hands was so filthy you could have sown mustard-and-cress on them and had a good crop. It's a mortal shame. Praps not. I fought like a brick for my fried fish and bread-and-dipping even if it did nearly kill me slick off.

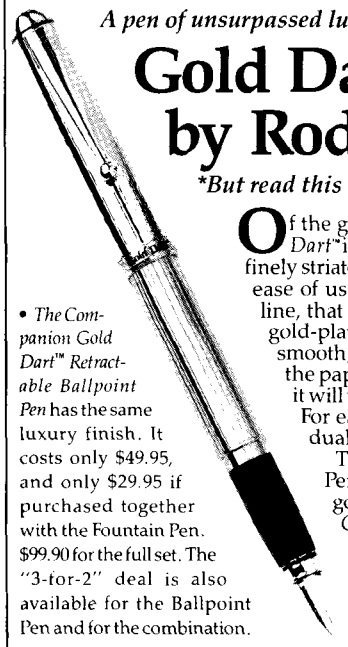
But what finally remains vivid, long after the novel has shrunk down to its afterimage in the mind, is the feverish abandon of Gull and the descriptions of his myriad mutilations. I have deliberately abstained from citing excerpts, not so much out of fear of giving offense (though they very well might), but more to allow the prospective reader the full frisson, which is very much part of the experience of the book. The passages are raw and uninhibited; they transmit perfectly Sickert's fascinated repulsion. The visual precision is a triumph of artistic detachment, even as it horrifies. *The Women of Whitechapel*, however, is no *American Psycho*. In Sickert, West has created the very thing that Bret Easton Ellis lacks: a ravaged conscience capable of examining the moral ramifications of the gratuitously perverse.

Still, a question arises. Is there something to this recent fascination with vile acts of mutilation in our arts? I'm think-

A pen of unsurpassed luxury, now finally within your reach. . .

Gold Dart™ Fountain Pen by Rodell-7 only $69.95**

But read this ad for an even better deal!



• *The Companion Gold Dart™ Retractable Ballpoint Pen* has the same luxury finish. It costs only $49.95, and only $29.95 if purchased together with the Fountain Pen. $99.90 for the full set. The "3-for-2" deal is also available for the Ballpoint Pen and for the combination.

Of the great pens of the Rodell-7 line none approaches the *Gold Dart*™ in the luxury of its execution. The pen is sheathed in finely striated metal, micron 14-k gold-plated, for a lifetime of luxury, ease of use, and writing enjoyment. Like all nibs in the Rodell-7 line, that of the *Gold Dart*™ is made in West Germany. It is heavily gold-plated and topped with an iridium point. It provides silky smooth, effortless writing—the pen literally appears to float across the paper. And because iridium is among the noblest of metals, it will virtually never wear out, no matter how much you use it. For ease of use and convenience, the *Gold Dart*™ comes with dual ink supply: pump converter and replaceable cartridges. The most remarkable thing about the *Gold Dart*™ *Fountain Pen* is its amazingly low price. Look at European or American gold-plated pens and you will find them at $300 or more. The *Gold Dart*™ though at least equivalent to those pens in quality and performance, costs only $69.95. But we have an even better deal. ***Buy two for $139.90, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Now enjoy a whole new experience in writing, treat yourself to a thing of beauty, high style and luxury, and order your *Gold Dart*™ *Fountain Pen(s)* today!

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 882-3050
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Please give order **#5100 A816** for Gold Dart Fountain Pens, **#5101 A816** for Gold Dart Ballpoint Pens, and **#5104 A816** for the Gold Dart Sets (Fountain Pen and Ballpoint Pen). If you prefer, mail check or card authorization and expiration date. We need daytime phone for all orders and issuing bank for charge orders. Add shipping/insurance: $6.95 for one, $8.95 for three. Add sales tax for CA delivery. You have 30-day return and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

since 1967
haverhills®
131 Townsend Street, San Francisco, CA 94107

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing not just of West and Ellis, but also of Jonathan Demme's *The Silence of the Lambs*. Are we searching for the last taboo—the desecration of the radiant human form divine—or simply proving that there is no taboo left? Or is it that our instincts of response have so atrophied from the media's parade of carnage that the artist is urged to raise the stakes? West's vision is probing in this way, but he is finally searching for the psychology beyond the pathology.

SVEN BIRKERTS is completing *American Energies: Essays on Fiction*, to be published next year by Morrow.

The Man Who Made Modernity

BY LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI

Luther: Man Between God and the Devil by Heiko A. Oberman translated by Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart

(Yale University Press, 336 pp., $29.95)

Sometime before the First World War, somebody came up with the idea of convening a meeting of the direct descendants of Martin Luther. Several hundred of them turned up, including the famous socialist leader Liebknecht and the no less famous German industrialist Zeiss. There is no guessing what any of them, or any of their descendants still alive, retained from their great ancestor. It is easier, though notoriously controversial, to say in what sense all of us who have no blood ties to Luther may (or must) consider ourselves his spiritual offspring. Whatever happened in European history after Luther is, as we see it retrospectively, hardly conceivable without him: wars and philosophy, national movements and literature, religious conflicts and the reform of the Roman Church, economic development and education. Of few people may we say with such certainty that they decisively shaped the course of history.

Not that the storm he provoked was to blow in the direction he would have wished. In most respects, the opposite was the case. Luther was a strange man of God, a man of religious passion, sometimes wild and brutal, occasionally not shunning the scatological. His celebrated comments on Rome, on peasants, on Jews, on Turks, on Erasmus could constitute an anthology of unflattering texts that would be genuine but false. It is not enough to repeat the familiar warning that Luther's words, like everybody else's, should be read in their "historical context," or that Luther was "a child of his age."

He was a child of his age, to be sure; everybody is. If he had been only that, however, he would have died an obscure monk, or one of many unknown teachers of theology in a provincial university. People who cause spiritual earthquakes of such magnitude can never be just children of their age. They open a new age, and therefore they can never be properly "explained" by their social and intellectual environment. They violate the historical process and break its continuity. In vain do we shift the responsibility for their deeds onto anonymous forces of their milieu; millions of people lived in Luther's educational conditions, but there was no Martin Luther apart from Martin Luther.

The new age that he opened, violently but unwillingly, was not supposed to be new at all. For Luther was a reactionary, if one may employ a noun that did not exist at his time but that he might not have been ashamed of. Like many reformers, he dreamed of going back to the purity of the Christianity of the apostles; of destroying the tradition (that is, of destroying the pronouncements of the Church and the popes as a separate source of authority alongside the Bible); of demolishing false rituals and false sacraments that the Great Foe, disguised in papal garments, imposed on the Christian people; and finally of demolishing the Whore of Babylon, the Roman Curia itself. For centuries the Church had lived in the clutches of Antichrist. (As Bossuet irrefutably noticed about Luther's account, the German lands had received Christianity from the hands of Antichrist). The time had come to convert it to the Gospel.

At first Luther's intention was to reform the conscience of Christians, to make them realize not only that they lived under the sway of corrupted prelates and idle monks, but also that the teaching of the Savior had been corrupted to suit the greed of Rome. Just read St. Paul and be enlightened, he taught. For you can do nothing for your salvation, nor can the pope and his fund-raisers. By nature we all deserve damnation, and only God's gratuitous mercy saves some by giving them the gift of faith. The just live by faith alone.

Simple, isn't it? For the next two centuries all the theologians of all the persuasions in Europe—Lutherans, Calvinists, Jesuits, Jansenists, Unitarians, Arminians—were busy trying to explain those few sentences in St. Paul's letters and to clarify the relationships between grace and nature, between divine omnipotence and the responsibility of human creatures for their salvation. Huge libraries were filled with books devoted to the subject, which became crucial for the definition of various groups, sects, denominations, and churches. It caused splits and conflicts that resulted in wars, bloody persecutions, and massacres. To be sure, the matter was not self-contained: it was connected with many other religious and social issues.

Still, modern times started with those ninety-five sentences written in the small provincial town of Wittenberg by an Augustinian monk who became indignant (he was by no means the first) at the trade of indulgences. Modern times started, in other words, with violent attacks against modernity, against reason, against humanism, against philosophy, against human will, against nature, against the worship of pagan antiquity.

Being the accidental father of everything that came later, Luther became the accidental father of modern philosophy. He hated philosophy—it was no more than an expression of the self-conceit of pagan wiseacres who got it into their heads that divine mysteries can be fathomed by corrupted human reason—but he could not prevent it from flourishing on the soil he fertilized. The radicals of the Reformation argued—on the basis of Luther's criticisms, but against Luther—that the visible church is useless or harmful, and that true Christianity is in the "interior man," in the conscience of every Christian separately. German mystics and pantheists continued his work, though nothing was more remote from Luther's mind than pantheism. (Except perhaps deism, but deism, too, was his illegitimate offspring; if there is no highest authority on earth to interpret the Scripture, what else can a theologian rely upon but his own corrupted reason?) The entire German philosophy was to be Lutheran, no matter the horror with which Luther himself might have looked at it from his heavenly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

et us hope) shelter. Hegel was Luther's escendant, and so was his mordant crit- Kierkegaard. The "spiritual revolu- on," as Germans like to call it, turned urope upside down and left no stone in s place.

Luther's life is exceptionally well doc- mented, in part because so many cholars were interested in it, but to a rge extent thanks to his own letters, ritings, and speeches. A good biogra- hy consisting of Luther's own words as published in the early nineteenth entury. General books on Luther's life nd work are fairly numerous (my fa- orite is still Lucien Febvre's). Do we eed another biography? I ask this uestion, but I know it is silly. There re always other angles from which cholars may describe lives of great his- orical figures, and each of those angles s legitimate; no biography of Luther ill ever be "definitive."

Heiko Oberman, whose name is known to people interested in the early Reformation, has made the Devil the center of his book. This is a perfectly reasonable choice. The Devil's omnipresence in Luther's world is well nown. (Psychoanalysts fabricated, on his basis, a boring and predictable ex- planation of Lutheranism in terms of an nal fixation; this, like any of their "her- neneutic" devices, always works infalli- ly and unfalsifiably, like all the universal heories of history.) Visitors to the Wart- burg castle can admire (at least they ould over thirty years ago, when I was here) the stain on a wall left by the nk-pot that the angry Luther flung at he tempter who tried, understandably nough, to disturb his work on the trans- ation of the Holy Writ. There is nothing 'medieval" in this fascination with the lemonic. Quite the contrary. Medieval heologians paid some attention to the ndestructible enemy of humanity, but he obsessive interest in the realm of larkness is much more characteristic of he sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Oberman's book is very readable and s beautifully illustrated, but it is not xactly an introduction to Luther's hought. On many points it presupposes measure of familiarity with the subject; t ill be more useful and more stimulat- ng to readers who know something bout Luther and the Reformation. Oberman's story begins, aptly enough, vith Luther's death and funeral in Feb- uary 1546, when the prospects of the Reformation looked uncertain and frag- le. The first part of the book deals with he Reformation as a German event. It lescribes the fairly complicated situation n German lands, and the way that Lu- her's revolt influenced the existing con- flicts and was itself shaped by them. Then we learn about the short "medieval" history of the Reformation before Luther: Wycliffe, Hus, Franciscans, assorted millenarian ideas and movements. Luther, argues Oberman, never dreamed about building the kingdom of God on earth. Painfully aware of the tremendous power of "the prince of this world," he thought less about a thorough reform of the human condition and more about the sheer survival of mankind until the Day of Judgment and the end of all things mortal.

Then we follow Luther's early life, in Oberman's telling: his family background, his years at the University of Erfurt and the encounter with nominalist philosophy, his "road to Wittenberg" and admission to the Augustinian order, his famous trip to Rome and his shock at the sight of corruption reigning in the Holy City, his professorial career and the "great discovery" that was to slant the course of European history. "And it was not the ninety-five theses themselves that had such a revolutionary effect on posterity," Oberman contends. "The decisive event was the subsequent debate on the question of the fallibility of councils, the supreme power of the pope, and the right to admonish the Church, on scriptural grounds, to change its ways."

Of course, indulgences had been criticized before Luther. Of course, the corruption in the Church had been the target of attacks from a variety of standpoints. Of course, German lands had cruelly experienced their weakness in the face of Rome. Of course, many people had voiced a feeling of urgency and called for reform. Of course, Erasmus's works were circulating all over Europe when nobody had heard of Luther. When we reflect on such well-known facts, we are often tempted to say that the conditions were "ripe" for the Reformation, thus suggesting that Luther was inevitable, that he merely plucked a ready fruit from the tree of history.

This, however, is the easy wisdom of hindsight. We cannot prove that the zeitgeist "waited" for Luther; and if he had failed to appear, we would not be short of arguments to explain why the attempt to reform the Church fizzled out. However convincingly we can depict his spiritual itinerary from despair about his own force in fighting against hell, to the theology of grace, to the establishment of a new (or old) Christian community—there was no historical "logic," no inevitability, about it. Indeed, as Oberman notes:

> At the beginning of the sixteenth century, monks competed with university professors for the lowest ranking in public esteem. Both had long since become figures of public ridicule. Luther thus had what seems to be the worst possible qualifications for a popular reformer.

Luther, in sum, was a great accident.

When we look at Luther's theology and its ramifications, we may interpret it in terms of the never-ending tension between the legalistic tradition of the Church (*ex opere operato*, the sacrament of priesthood, papal infallibility, hierarchy, formalization of sins and repentance, and so on) and the Pauline "religion of grace." We can track this tension in a variety of theological and moral problems, and find it in a number of early heresies (like the doctrines of the Donatists and the Montanists). Radical attempts to dismantle the entire legalistic fabric of the Church had to be condemned, of course, but they were not necessarily inefficient: as Luther was dying, the Council of Trent was in its first stage, and the Jesuit order had been recently approved. The Counter-Reformation, and thus the internal reform of the Church, had begun. It is not implausible, therefore, to think that he unwillingly saved the Roman Church, too.

LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI is the author most recently of *Modernity on Endless Trial* (University of Chicago Press).

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

can theater director and critic (and TNR's theater critic from 1949 to 1953), I would be pleased to hear from anyone who may possess some of his letters or may know of the whereabouts of any of them.

ROBERT H. HETHMON
22121 Hart Street
Canoga Park, California 91303

HOME STUDY COURSE
in economics. A 10-lesson study that will throw light on today's baffling problems. Tuition free—small charge for materials.
Write Henry George Institute, 121 E. 30th Street, New York, NY 10016,

HOW TO EXECUTE AN AGENCY
by E. Waterhouse Allen
Wicked, informed satire about Bureaucratic Types you should recognize! Distilled from 50 years work in human service agencies. 1st edit., $3.95.
BARK-BACK
P.O. Box 235, Glenshaw, PA 15116.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

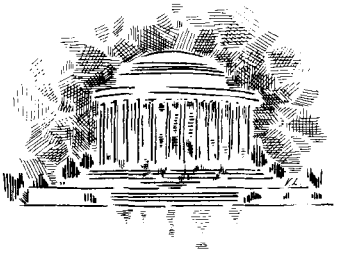
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Taken unseriously

THE DEATH OF MICHAEL OAKESHOTT was greeted in America the same way it was greeted in the English village in which he lived for the last three decades of his life. Almost no one noticed. Those among the villagers who read the obituaries in the London papers were surprised to learn that their neighbor, the sprightly, reclusive octogenarian, who drove a blue MG sports car and lived in a rustic cottage on the edge of a quarry, had been regarded as one of the most original political philosophers of the century. Lee Auspitz, in a forthcoming article in *The American Scholar*, tells how the pastor at the sparse Anglican funeral even got Oakeshott's first name wrong, as the coffin tipped into the earth. The villagers knew who he was, of course. The shopkeepers recognized his face; others knew that his wife was a painter; his neighbors had seen a variety of odd characters troop in and out of the old man's cottage over the years. They just didn't know what he did. And they had no idea what he meant.

MICHAEL OAKESHOTT WROTE ONLY two books in his life. The first, published in 1933, was an ambitious, intense attempt to describe all of experience—no less—in the philosophical idiom of Hegel and F. H. Bradley. He called it *Experience and its Modes*, finding in experience different "modes" of seeing the world: science, history, practical life, and, in a later afterthought, poetry. All of experience, he argued, could be found somewhere in these worlds, if you looked hard and carefully enough. His second book, *On Human Conduct*, published in 1975, was an account of one mode: practical life, the world in which most of us spend most of our days. In it, he fleshed out a philosophy of law and of politics. Between these two tomes, Oakeshott taught—he ran the politics department at the London School of Economics for many years—and wrote a batch of essays and reviews. His only other work, *A Guide to the Classics*, was not a disquisition on Romans and Greeks, but a guide to horse-racing. Of his intellectual achievements, the most unchallenged is his theory of history, which ranks perhaps with Vico's in its originality and scope.

SOUNDS DRY ENOUGH, AND SOME of it, frankly, *is* dry. To me, however, Oakeshott meant something a little different. I first came across him in an essay I found while doing some reading on Hobbes. It's not one of his most accessible, and, to tell the truth, I didn't understand a good deal of it. But there was something in the assurance of its prose that stuck somewhere in my mind. The essay was in a collection of his, *Rationalism in Politics*. A couple of months later I came across it again in a secondhand bookstore and took it home. I started reading. Within four years of that discovery, I'd tracked down and read everything Oakeshott had published, and spent a year doing little else but trying to puzzle him out. It was about as painless a way of writing a doctorate as I could have imagined.



TOWARD THE END of my labors, I got to meet the man himself. I wrote to ask him whether he would be willing to discuss his work (mine was only the third dissertation ever written on him), and he wrote back, in his elegant calligraphy, that he'd be glad to. I found my way to his village, Langton Matravers, by train from London, and arrived in midmorning, in the cloying November mist of southern England. He was waiting at the garden gate, with a mischievous grin on his face, and hustled me inside. The cottage was made entirely of slate and had no central heating. I discovered only three rooms: a cramped kitchen to one side, a poky guest room, and a living room, turned into a makeshift duplex, with a ladder leading to the second story, which this 89-year-old clambered up each day to get to bed. The walls were lined with books, in various languages, from Victorian potboiler novels to Hegel's *Phenomenology*. He made me coffee, and a meticulous four-course lunch, and, in front of a coal-fire, we talked.

MY TROUBLE WITH OAKESHOTT had always been with his restraint. He started his intellectual life with a grand attempt to perceive the truth about the world, and over the decades had slowly shifted into an elegant digression about the world's texture. His last essay was actually a work of allegorical fiction, as if the struggle to perceive the truth had proved too demanding to continue, even pointless. I raised the issue: Did he share the philosophical lassitude of so many of his contemporaries? He replied by saying that giving up the search for "the truth" was not equivalent to believing that it did not exist. His restraint came from modesty, not nihilism. Everything is true, h averred, so long as it is not taken fc anything more than it is. The nuanc were everything, perhaps more tho oughly within our reach, perhaps th only way ultimately to understand th whole.

AS IN PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION. OAKI shott's first essays concerned religiou truth, but since the 1930s there had bee an utter silence. Faith, one could glea from between the lines of his writing, w too acute, even too crushing, an oblig tion to sustain; or too important, to mysterious, to writ about. He seemed eve to enjoy the ambiguity c half-belief, seeing sin a the occasion of a fasc nating conversation wit oneself and with Goc rather than as an oppre sive encumbrance t happiness. "After all," he quipped, half seriou ly, "who would want t be *saved*?" God migh even prefer us as we are: we're more in teresting flawed, and, without flaws, n real love is possible anyway, either be tween us, or between us and God. Love Oakeshott explained, has its origins i mutual amusement, and ends in "tota acceptance" of the other person. Or a he put it in one of his essays, "Friend are not concerned with what can b made of one another, but only with th enjoyment of one another; and the con dition of enjoyment is a ready accep tance of what is and the absence of an desire to change or improve."

THIS RADICAL ACCEPTANCE IS WHA he put at the heart of his idea of th conservative temperament, and it is wh many modern conservatives find him s awkward a figure. This disposition i alien to them: it is fickle, aloof humane, where they are consistent engaged, and rationalist. Oakeshot couldn't care less about politics a such, who wins and loses, what is nov vulgarly called the "battle of ideas." H cared about understanding the rela tions between human beings, and h saw the vagaries of human beings as oc casions for celebration, rather than a rection. His paradigm was dramatic, no programmatic. His life was poetic, no prosaic. His conservative politics were not a means to repress man's exuber ance, but a way to allow it to flourish when politics ends. In this, he was ou of his time, but also curiously at hom in it: a wild flower planted among ou wheat.

ANDREW SULLIVAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We're accused of being obsessed with perfection, precision and meticulous attention to every detail. Thank you.

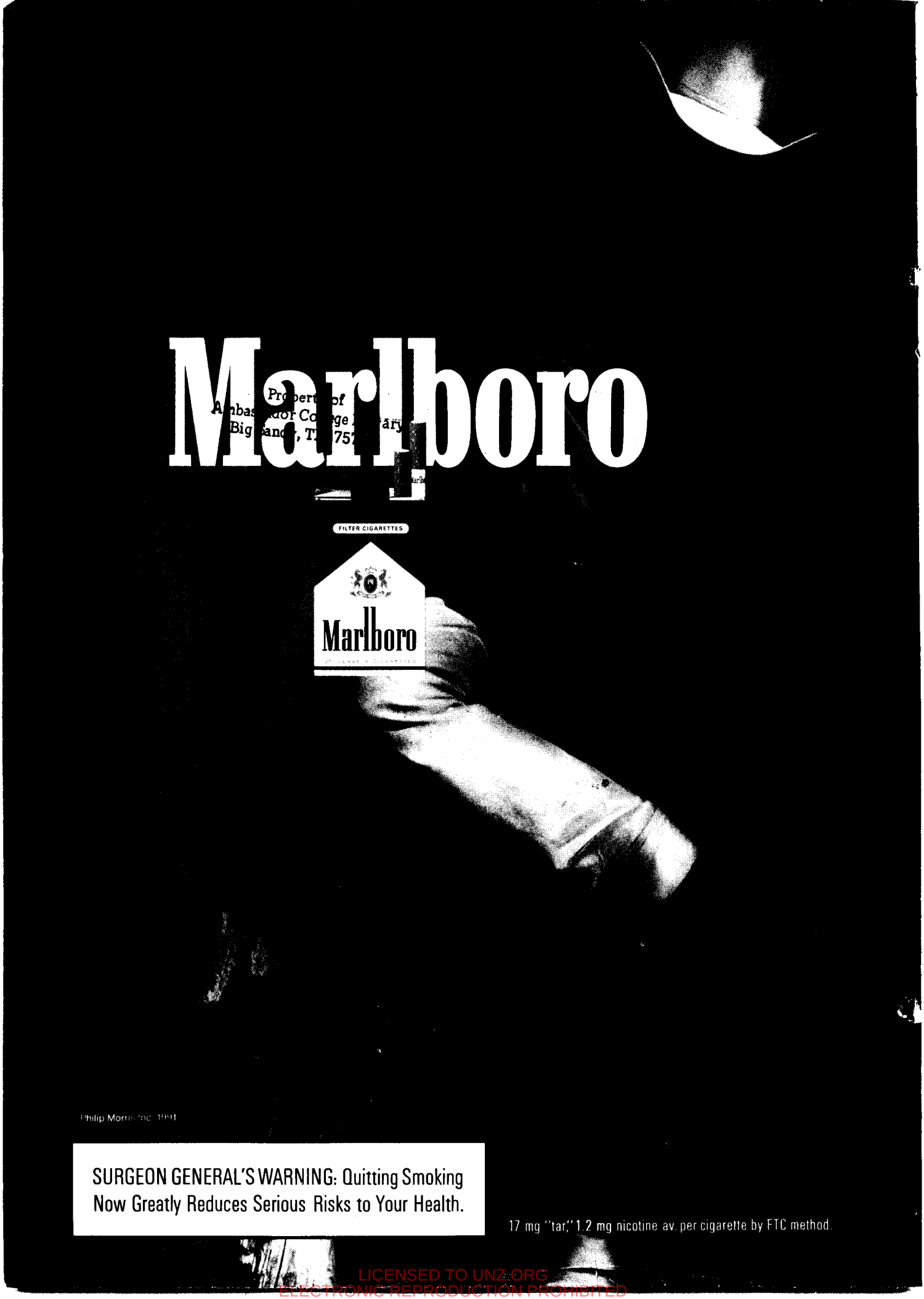
The little things on a flight tell you a lot about an airline. So you'll notice that at Lufthansa, your drink and meal arrive at the same time. And that your electronic headset is free even in Economy Class. Or if you don't want to eat, drink or watch movies, you can get a "Do Not Disturb" sign. Of course, the way our crew works together also adds to your flight. Things like these show our passion to make your flight enjoyable. One you feel in everyone at Lufthansa. From the wine steward who inspects every bottle to the pilot who gets you there on time. *A passion for perfection*℠ that ensures you the best flying experience possible.

A passion for perfection.℠

Lufthansa

Lufthansa is a participant in the mileage programs of United, Delta, USAir and Continental. See your Travel Agent for details.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


Marlboro
FILTER CIGARETTES
Marlboro
Philip Morris Inc. 1991
SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.
17 mg "tar," 1.2 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

Property of Ambassador College Library Big Sandy, TX 757
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED